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A SEARCH FOR FORTUNE

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOUNGER SON

A Narrative of Travel and Adventure

BY

HAMILTON LINDSAY-BUCKNALL

(ASSOC. OF THE INST. C.E.)

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS BY P. W. BARLOW, Jun.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."
SHAKSPEARE.

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TO

MRS. COLLINS OF MONALINE

This Volume

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

AS A MEMENTO OF A CHERISHED AND SINCERE FRIENDSHIP,

BY HER COUSIN,

THE AUTHOR.

Clark - 26 July, 1904

PREFACE.

FOREIGN fields, comparatively untravelled or undescribed, form the nucleus of the adventures of a younger son in his "Search for Fortune."

During my residence abroad I have been astonished at the number of young gentlemen of good family who annually leave "the old country" to take upon themselves the difficulties, the trials, and the dangers which have to be encountered in the colonies and elsewhere. Many of them arrive, like myself, without any fixed intentions or ideas as to what they are to do or what is to become of them.

In some instances they have no money, in others they have a little: in the former case it is incumbent upon them at once to turn their attention to anything they can find to do; in the latter they almost invariably remain in town as long as they have any money left, fondly imagining that something will turn up exactly to their taste.

In many instances they are physically unfit for hardship, and then their position is deplorable indeed. If they have friends, these friends will sometimes in kindness take care of them until they communicate with relatives at home,

when arrangements are made for their return; but often no such luck is in store for them, and they are obliged to go through the greatest misery and hardships, too often ending in death.

The present system of competitive examinations, in a great measure, may account for the large number of young gentlemen of this class who go abroad, as it is only a mere handful of those that present themselves for examination who can by any possibility be successful, and there is consequently nothing for it but "go abroad."

There is yet another class constantly met with, viz., those who, for some reason, have retired from the profession they had selected—often the army or the navy—and whose means are insufficient to allow of a life of idleness, and who are unable to obtain civil employment at home. Letters of introduction are procured, and thriving colonies selected, whither, full of hope, they proceed, but only to find out, upon arrival, that it is almost as difficult to obtain remunerative employment abroad as in the country they have left.

If they are possessed of a little capital it is generally spent in the cities or towns they first reach, "while they are looking round them." Often they get "taken in" by crafty and dishonest persons, who are ever ready to *receive* and *deceive* them. More often inexperience makes dupes of them, when instead of learning something of the mode of life they have selected, before investing their money, they are too anxious at once to start on their own account, and discover their mistake when too late.

I shall not here enter into further explanations with regard to the dangers and difficulties that beset the class

of emigrants I have described, as those of my readers who take the trouble of following me through these pages will use their own judgment, and note in its proper place the remarks I have made with respect to the different modes of life which are usually selected.

I do not say that there are not many who enjoy the actual roughing that is gone through, as there is much that makes up for the inconveniences in store for those who love a life of freedom—sport and change of scene; but perhaps even these will agree with me that success is comparatively rare, though by no means impossible.

Perseverance is the quality most needed, and with this and a stout heart, I believe almost anything can be accomplished.

THE AUTHOR.

MONALINE,
NEWTOWN MOUNT KENNEDY,
CO. WICKLOW.
1878.

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CHAPTER I.

Introduction—School-days—The Kildare Hounds—Choosing a profession—The militia.

I SHALL not bore my reader by entering into details with regard either to my birth, parentage, or which particular town or district I was born in; suffice it to say, I have been always given to understand that "I came of a good old stock," which settled in the west of Ireland many generations ago.

I have heard my parents remark that I was always a good-hearted, idle sort of boy, and I believe this character was borne out more or less during my school-days; for I think I may safely assert that I was a favourite with my school-fellows, but did not succeed in carrying away many prizes, though I experienced little difficulty in mastering any subject to which "I really" gave attention, and found no difficulty whatever in passing over the "Pons Asinorum."

My school-days were passed, I have reason to believe, very much in the same way as those of other boys possessing my peculiarities, although perhaps they may have been more varied, embracing as they did a short sojourn both in France and Germany, and finishing with a private tutor at home.

By this time I had arrived at the period of "hobbledehoyism," and being, as I have already stated, rather

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inclined to idleness, I paid far more attention to my pony than to my classics and mathematics, and being in a specially hunting county, soon prevailed upon my father to allow me to accompany him to the "meets" just once a week.

I was not, however, destined to remain long satisfied with a mere view of a cover-side, and soon found myself endeavouring to follow the hounds for a short distance, a matter in which I was so far successful as to cause my father to remark that, "if I intended going so far I had better be mounted upon something able to carry me." So, in course of time, the pony was turned over to a younger brother, and I was promoted to a regular hunter. I was now all in my glory, and was able in a short time to prove that in the art of fox-hunting at least I was not slow in making considerable progress.

It was now time, however, to think seriously, being a younger son, of choosing a profession, and I was not long in selecting the army. But a new regulation had just been issued from the Horse Guards, altering the minimum of age for entrance to the service from sixteen to seventeen years, and being barely sixteen I was thus precluded for the present from obtaining my commission, although I was quite prepared at this time to undergo the examination required by regulations.

Subsequently it was decided that I should join a militia regiment for the present, the militia being then, on account of the Indian mutiny, embodied for continuous service. I was therefore gazetted to the —— Light Infantry, quartered at Great Yarmouth, and spent my two months preliminary leave in learning my drill with the 22nd Regiment, then stationed in Dublin.

I passed a very pleasant time with my regiment at the various places in which we were quartered. Great Yarmouth especially was a most agreeable quarter, and having

previously become initiated into my drill I had plenty of spare time for enjoying the hospitality of the town and neighbourhood. However, the Indian mutiny, like everything else, was destined in the course of time to come to an end, and so was the further continuous service of the militia. We were therefore ordered to proceed to our county town, whence, after having been inspected, we were disembodied and dismissed.

Thus ended my militia days, not, however, before making an unsuccessful attempt to induce a number of rank and file to volunteer with me for active service in New Zealand; but "the bold militiamen" did not see it.

CHAPTER II.

Reading for the Army—Our "Crammer"—"The Martial Youth"—Up for "Exam."—A successful hoax—Plucked.

AFTER leaving the county town at which I have said the disembodiment of my regiment took place, I accepted an invitation to spend some time with my cousins in the county L——, "to help to thin the grouse," the season for which had just commenced.

Here I remained for some time, in fact considerably after we had succeeded in shooting most of the birds, as it was one of those truly hospitable country houses situated amongst the mountains, of which too much cannot be said, in Ireland, and more especially had its attractions for me, as two of the most fascinating cousins that ever gladdened the heart of relative were then at home, and one in particular was a great friend of mine; in fact, she had stolen my heart, and I did not feel that I had much chance of ever getting it back again.

She was then merely a growing girl, but with an exceptionally good figure, and possessing those "eyes of most unholy blue," which Moore speaks of as characteristic of my country-women.

However, I was destined to postpone all the pleasant walks and talks and rides and dances, and so forth, which we had mutually arranged, as each day brought letters

from home urging me to return in order that I might commence "reading for the army."

This I at length consented to do, and with a heart in that state which will be readily understood by those whose memory can carry them back to their first love, I took leave and set out for home.

I was soon installed at a "grinder's," where, from the knowledge I had gained of military matters from my experience with the militia, I was considered a sort of authority upon everything relating to the army. My name was entered at the Horse Guards for a commission by purchase in the cavalry, and for a time I endeavoured to read; but, from accustomed idleness, I found this no easy task, and to add to which I found my companions as a rule perfectly indifferent as to whether they learned anything or not, and it was only by the greatest manœuvring that our "crammer" was able to stuff anything at all into us. He tried every artifice in his power; endeavoured to impress facts of history on our minds by twisting them into nursery rhymes, such as, for example,

"The South Sea Bubble
Caused lots of trouble,
And ruined plenty,
In seventeen twenty."

"Marlborough's victories we combine
In seventeen four, six, eight, and nine;"

and dozens of others in a similar strain. However, it was all no go. The "squad" with which I was associated were very awkward and not at all likely soon to become of much service to her Majesty, and when the time arrived for appearing before the examiners at Chelsea Hospital—for it was there examinations were held in those days—but few of us had any chance whatever of success.

I asked my tutor, a day or two before setting out for London, what likelihood of success he considered I should

have. He replied, with a most comical expression upon his face, "I have carefully considered the subject of your inquiry, and the result I anticipate is—" Here he retired a pace from me, and, striking an attitude, repeated the following parody on "The Minstrel Boy."

"THE MARTIAL YOUTH."

A martial youth has to Chelsea gone,
  Amongst the "plucked" you'll find him;
His tutor told him he could get on,
  But the d——l a bit he'd mind him.

"I want," says he, "in the Cavalry
  To purchase a commission,
But the only point that puzzles me
  Is English composition."

The youth was plucked, for he could not spell,
  Though taught by a first-rate crammer,
The simplest rules he failed to tell
  In Lindley Murray's grammar.

Too fond of larks, he made too few marks,
  A result which he may well see;
So he won't appear for another year
  In the Hospital at Chelsea.

And never did prognostications prove truer. During the examination week I had rooms in Sloane Street, not far from the Hospital. Here I invited my friends to dinner, and neglected brushing up the coming subject for the morrow. I was much impressed myself at the folly of not spending more quiet and profitable evenings, for I cannot say that I remained each evening at home, or even went to bed early. You will not therefore be surprised when I say that a guilty conscience was easily taken in by the following hoax :—

It was the last day but one for appearing in the examination hall, and I had asked a few friends to dinner. One or two had already arrived and dinner-hour was approaching, when a knock was heard at the door, and from a brougham alighted an officer attired in the uniform of the Royal Horse Guards. He was quite a stranger to

me, but one of my friends introduced him as secretary to General F——, chief at the Horse Guards. The stranger preserved the strictest silence, but presently seeing me alone, pulled out a pocket-book and wrote down and then handed me to read, "I do not wish to expose you before your friends, but the General has heard of everything you have been doing while in town, and you need not appear for examination to-morrow. Please write any reply you have to make." I took the proffered memorandum-book, and wrote down, "Very sorry for what has occurred, but I hardly expected to pull through, so please sit down and join us at dinner;" to which invitation he replied, still in writing, "Such is my intention." This I thought cool, to say the least.

If the mysterious stranger was overcome with excessive grief at my misfortunes, which prevented him from uttering a syllable, it certainly had no effect whatever either upon his powers of eating or drinking everything that came before him. Whispers were passed that this was his peculiarity. I did not bother myself much about him until dinner was partly over, when I determined to make him speak. So I told him I was much obliged for his civility in giving me the preliminary warning, but as I did not think it necessary to preserve silence upon the subject before the goodly company assembled to do honour to my board, I requested him to throw off all reserve and join in our conversation. At this there was a peal of laughter from a portion of my guests, but no reply from the secretary. This annoyed me so much that I requested him, at the same time ringing the bell, either to reply or leave my rooms, accompanied by a not very complimentary message for the "powers" who sent him. But all this produced nothing but further peals of laughter at my expense. This was more than human nature could stand, and I was about to put the intruder out "neck and crop," when I

was stopped by one of my friends, who called me aside and explained the mystery.

The whole thing was got up as a joke, planned by an ex-officer of dragoons and a sub in the Blues, both of whom were my guests, and the secretary was a deaf and dumb gentleman well known about town. Of course I laughed heartily at the whole thing, and we all passed a pleasant evening, which I am sorry to say may partly account for the result of my examination, for I was "plucked."

I don't think my relations were very much disappointed at the result, as I obtained very good marks in all the higher branches of mathematics and in other subjects which I took up, and failed to qualify merely in the less important subjects. So I thought I should have plenty of spare time to amuse myself, and would postpone any further reading till a short time before the next examination, when I would return and get "crammed" once more, and give no more dinner-parties when "up for examination."

CHAPTER III.

Ireland again—Brighton—The Southdown Hunt—"Rough un's"—A mistake and its result—A fair exchange is no robbery—In difficulties and in love—Little Red Riding Hood.

I RETURNED to Ireland, but my family having gone abroad for a time, I accepted several invitations to stay with country friends.

In this way I managed to pass my time very pleasantly. I had lots of capital shooting and fishing, and I soon became quite an adept at these arts.

Of course the visit I intended paying my cousins in L—— had most attractions for me, but I did not go there at once, as I preferred to pay all others first, so that I should not have to leave them until the last moment.

Upon my arrival very little was said with regard to my recent examinations. "Better luck next time," was the only remark made upon the subject. I found my favourite cousin looking handsomer than ever, and likely to grow into a very fine girl. Here, as may be supposed, I was immeasurably happy, for what more could I desire? But this was not the way to get my commission in the army; so, after a time I was obliged once more to set out again to get "crammed" for my examination; this time joining my parents, who had meanwhile arrived at Brighton. However, as I still imagined I had plenty of spare time, I did not immediately set to work; but, it being hunting

season, thought I should enjoy a little sport before commencing my studies, interspersed with any other gaiety which might happen to come in my way.

I soon found my hunting extending from one to two days a week, hiring my second horse from a dealer in the town, and many pleasant runs I enjoyed with the "Southdowns," more especially in the lower portions of the country, where free from the downs. I had by this time become what is known as "a hard rider," and occasionally came in for mounts upon "rough 'uns," which were offered to me by owners who did not care to venture riding them themselves. Noticeable amongst them was an old steeplechaser, which had been at one time rather celebrated, but which amongst other vices never lost an opportunity of bolting. This animal, known as "Southdown," had several lessons from me in stiff countries. He was a magnificent fencer, however, and I always gave him his head, and kept well to the side of the running hounds, so his bolting propensities did not trouble me.

My hired horses brought me into trouble once or twice, as I never knew exactly what kind of an animal I was going to be mounted upon. One morning, after hurrying through my breakfast, expecting my horse to be brought to the door every moment, a groom appeared leading a very handsome big-boned horse, the beau-idéal of a hunter. I went out, and directly I made my appearance the groom saluted me, pulled down the irons, and without asking any questions I mounted the proffered steed, which I of course accepted as the horse I had ordered from Silverthorn's. We met at the "Devil's Dike," and drew cover at the foot of the downs. But instead of the fox leading up the hill, he made straight for the river country. In the low grounds we had a splendid run at a racing pace for an hour and fifteen minutes, and never

was I better carried. I made up my mind to ask Silverthorn either to name his price for the horse, or to let me have it for the remainder of the season, and set out to jog quietly home, saving as much as possible my A 1 steed.

I had not, however, proceeded far, when I heard somebody calling to me to hold hard, and, on looking round, perceived a most excited-looking gentleman, whom I recognised as my next-door neighbour, whose arrival I had heard of the previous day, and who was the possessor of a first-rate horse, which was in training for a steeplechase. He called to me to dismount at once, an operation which I refused to perform without further explanation. His story was soon told. He was about to attend the "meet" just to exercise his horse, and his stupid groom, thinking I was his master's friend, to whom he had given a mount, did not perceive that I had come out of the next house, and naturally my hunting costume assisted in deceiving him still further. I, of course, heartily apologised, and at once dismounted, and remounted the old screw which he had obtained in order to follow the man whom he was sure had stolen his horse. My explanation soon soothed his mind, and we rode homeward together, I assuring him I was never better carried in my life, and he congratulating himself upon recovering his horse sound in wind and limb. I did not hear whether he afterwards won his race, but it was not my fault if one at least of the morning gallops was not beneficial, and I can at all events, I think, answer for the water jump.

Upon another occasion I had ordered my horse to be sent to Lewes by train, but unfortunately he showed symptoms of lameness on his way to the station, and my servant, therefore, returned to the stable with him, sending me word of the occurrence to Lewes, whither I had preceded him.

This was a great disappointment, as the district in

which we were to meet was an excellent hunting country. However, all I could do was to hire a pony from the landlord of an inn in the town. Upon this animal I trotted to the meet and coverside, expecting merely to see the dogs do their work. They had not been in the cover five minutes, however, before I heard a "Tally ho!" from a little hill just above me, and looking in the direction indicated, I saw a splendid running fox jogging along the other side of the fence which separated me from the cover. In another moment I heard the sweet music of a true old hound, and presently away went the entire pack to a magnificent scent. But what was I to do on the immovable cob? In despair I raced him at the fence, either to fall in or get over; but all to no other effect than to baulk an evidently timid young gentleman, whose horse "refused" following my "lead." What was now to be done? We were losing precious moments, not easily to be redeemed, for the pace was rattling, so I suggested to the young gentleman on the horse "that very often a change of rider made a great difference in the performances of a hunter, and that probably my pony might take the fence steered by him and *vice versâ*, and when on the other side we could change again." This course being agreed upon the change was soon made. I mounted into his saddle without waiting to alter stirrups, and went straight at the fence, which my new mount cleared in splendid style. I looked back for a moment, but only to perceive my late companion endeavouring to adjust the stirrups on my now restless pony. He stared in amazement at me, but it was too late; the temptation was too great for me, and I was soon hurrying with the "whip," who had last left cover, and whom I had joined; and in less than six minutes was in the "first flight," looking for the best place in each fence as I approached it. We had a capital run; but with regard to my badly treated new acquaintance, I did not

find him till late in the day, and I am afraid he never forgave me, notwithstanding the many plausible excuses I endeavoured to induce him to accept.

The story soon spread through the hunting-field, and finally, having exchanged mounts once more, the young gentleman, to avoid the chaffing he received on every side, made his escape, and I never met him out hunting again.

My reader will no doubt imagine that I was at least possessed of considerable means, but such was not the case, and I regret to say I was fast contracting debts. This system could not last long, nor did it improve my chances of getting a commission; and to add to my difficulties, I had become faithless to my first love, and attached to another beautiful and charming young lady, whose mamma thought it wise "to speak seriously to me." What was I to do? I told mamma it was all up; that I had no means to marry upon, and what was more, would very shortly be obliged to give up all idea of the army, and seek my fortune in some foreign land where, if fortune was not as fickle as love, I might discover some "Eldorado," when I would return and claim the hand of her daughter.

A few nights afterwards gave me an opportunity of explaining everything to the young lady herself, whom I met at a fancy ball, attired as Little Red Riding Hood, and where she was by far the prettiest and most tastefully dressed in the room.

I am pleased to be enabled to announce that the young lady was shortly afterwards married to another and more worthy admirer than myself, and I have many times since had the pleasure of meeting her, and of taking upon my knees her nice little children.

CHAPTER IV.

Off to New Zealand—Gravesend—Saying farewell—Rosherville Gardens—The *Egmont*—Fellow-passengers—The ship's surgeon—St. Helena—A memento—Cape Town—Difficulties of coaling—A break down—How I obtained a light—Rough weather—Shipping a sea, and results—Melbourne—Café de Paris—Spiers and Pond—My journey continued.

AS I have mentioned in the last chapter, it was now my intention to give up all idea of the army, and go abroad "in search of fortune." I settled my debts, with the assistance of my father, and where to go to was soon decided; either Australia or New Zealand, I did not much care which. I was introduced to all manner of people, who had visited the colonies, amongst others, a most successful old Scotch gentleman, who had made a very large fortune by sheep-farming in Australia.

This old gentleman I called on at his club, where I found him resting full-length upon a sofa. He was suffering very much from gout, and his narrative was every now and then cut short by the severe twitches he received from that painful malady. However, he told me that he arrived in Melbourne with the traditional guinea in his pocket; had been a "gentle shepherd" and attended sheep for his master barefooted for ten years, often sleeping in the open air in his wet clothes; and, finally, after forty-five years hard work, there he was, with a large fortune, and one of the finest houses in London, and

nothing to do but enjoy himself, and concluded by asking "What did I think of that?"

I replied, no doubt he had been very successful, but with all due respect to him, I thought he had been very foolish in going so long without his shoes and socks, as that in all probability might account for the pain he seemed then to be suffering. He appeared surprised at my reply, but went on to ask "whether I would not put up with a little gout to be the possessor of ten thousand pounds a year?" to which I replied, quickly and with all sincerity, "I would rather be sound in wind and limb with a five pound note in my pocket, than all this wealth, if with it I had to suffer the torture he seemed to be undergoing." This appeared to annoy the old gentleman so very much that he told me I would never do any good in Australia; I therefore determined to try New Zealand.

In the course of a week or two, I had secured my passage and the things I required as an outfit. I selected a steamer which was advertised as sister ship to the *Otago*, which vessel had made the extraordinary quick passage to Melbourne in fifty-one days and three hours.

"A ship, 'twas said, of great repute,
With cargo and passengers to boot,
And large saloons and table very grand,
In fifty days would reach another land.
Her name, a good one—''twas *Egmont*'—
Carried surgeon and all that one could want;
A 1 at Lloyd's, and up to any weight,
Was sure of not being one day late," &c., &c.

Thus I commenced my description of our voyage, in my first letter home; but the journey was never realised in the time, and we were altogether ninety days from Gravesend to Melbourne.

As the time arrived for going on board, I cannot say I felt very wretched at leaving England. I was accompanied to Gravesend by my relations, and one or two

special friends; one in particular, who was my great hunting companion, and whom I was really sorry to leave. My relations returned at once to London, but my friends remained on board to dinner, after which they also returned to town.

I now felt for the first time that I was going abroad. But still we did not seem to be getting under weigh, so I made inquiries as to the cause of the delay, and was told that the departure was postponed till early next morning.

I paced up and down the deck for a while, trying to make out who were passengers and who not, amongst the crowds upon the decks; and not being remarkably fond of the sea, I did not exactly understand why I should spend a night unnecessarily on board a steamer. So I hired a boat, and went on shore, intending to sleep at an hotel. But my boatman advised me to the contrary, assuring me that in the event of oversleeping I might lose my passage. He told me, what I had often heard before, that the place to spend a happy day was Rosherville, quite close. So to Rosherville I went. There I looked on at the happy couples dancing, who had no intention of leaving Old England in the morning. I was always fond of dancing. So throwing off all reserve, and as it was my last chance of a dance in England, perhaps, for many a long year, I selected a partner, and was soon amongst the gayest of the throng.

Dancing was kept up till daylight, I believe, but I left before dawn, and at five o'clock, the order was given—"Full steam a-head"—and I was off for New Zealand.

I soon made the acquaintance of most of our passengers, nearly all of whom were bound for Australia, of which country they were either old settlers or natives. There were several nice young fellows, one or two of whom were going out to become sheep farmers.

The most remarkable individual on board was the

surgeon of the ship, and with him I was supposed to share my cabin. I had remarked his very eccentric appearance, when I was first introduced to him, and his habit of speaking to himself, which peculiarity I trusted at least he would discontinue after "four bells;" but what was my surprise, about midnight, to be awakened by what I first thought was a lunatic, but who was no other than the doctor standing at my bedside in his long night robes, and imploring me not to put him out at the porthole, an operation which I now felt inclined to perform. I assured him, however, I had no such intention, and begged of him to return to his berth, and go to sleep; this, after a time, he did, waking me, however, about every fifteen minutes.

Next morning I spoke to him, but he seemed to remember nothing of the occurrence of the night further than his dreams coinciding with that which I have related; adding, however, that he was an occasional somnambulist, and begged of me not to mention the matter, as he was sure it would not happen again; so I promised to overlook it this time at least.

Next night I did not go to bed until I was quite tired, with the hope of sleeping so soundly that should he prove loquacious I would not be disturbed. But it was no use. About two A.M. he again went through the same performance, only this time varying his fears, which now were directed to the engine room, amongst the machinery of which he wished me not to throw him. Again I seemed by my promises to soothe him, and he returned to his bed; this time to remain pretty quiet, as I had told him, if he did not do so, in all human probability his fears would be realised. Next morning I informed him I could not put up with him another night. He then told me he suffered from severe nervousness, which accounted for all I had described to him.

Next day I was allotted another berth in the cabin with a young fellow going to New Zealand, and there I remained for the remainder of the voyage.

The poor doctor now had his cabin to himself, where it was necessary to fasten him in every night. He could, therefore, go through his midnight exploits to his heart's content. He was only twice during the remainder of the voyage seen in public as a somnambulist, and on both occasions his door had by accident been left unlocked. The first time he merely took his accustomed place at the dining-table; but, on the second occasion, he had wandered upon deck unperceived, had hidden himself in a sail which the boatswain was preparing to "rig," and it was only when it was about being set that the doctor was discovered.

Nothing remarkable occurred to vary the monotony after this, until our arrival at St. Vincent, Cape de Verde Islands, where we put in to replenish our exhausted coal stores. Here, for the first time, I saw real African niggers upon their native soil. St. Vincent was then, indeed, a very primitive place, important only as a coaling station. I have been there, however, a great many times since, and I do not know any place where the advancement of civilisation is more remarkable. It is no longer a convict station. Trees may be seen flourishing in the streets; a market place has been erected, and a submarine telegraph station has been established.

It was very amusing to see the little black "piccaninis" running about naked—now they are all clothed—and also to see the small boys diving from boats which had collected round the ship, for, at that time, coppers, but which is now performed—"so much for civilisation"—for nothing less than silver; these coins thrown from the vessel, they dive for and return with in their mouths.

It was the intention of our captain, from St. Vincent to

steer for the Cape of Good Hope, but from information received at St. Vincent, he decided to call at St. Helena in order to embark a portion of the "St. Helena Regiment" for New Zealand; this regiment having ceased to exist, the soldiers being allowed to volunteer for service in regiments serving in the Waikato.

We remained two days in Jamestown Roads, and of course took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded of visiting Longwood House, the residence of Napoleon during his banishment, and also his tomb.

It was when examining the latter, and while we were all eager to obtain some trophy as a memento of our visit, such as is afforded by the bark of the celebrated willow, a cutting from which may be seen in the form of an immense tree at the Royal Botanic Society's Gardens, Regent's Park, and the scarlet geraniums which grow within the rails, that my eye was attracted by the broken corner of the stone, the detached portion of which, as I rightly surmised was lying beneath it; seeing this I put my hand between the railings and picked up the piece. No sooner had I done so than my act was noticed by the sentry on duty, who, with fixed bayonet, made me his prisoner, and I was marched in triumph before the "Major d'Etat," followed by a host of my fellow-passengers.

The sentry soon told his story. The piece of stone was produced, and my conviction seemed established. The Major asked me whether I had broken the stone purposely; to which I replied, telling him my story, at the same time calling his attention to the fact that the fracture was not a recent one, and had all the appearance of having taken place some time since. This, on examination, turned out to be the case. So I was discharged, with many excuses; and as the stone remained upon the table, and had not been forbidden me, I took it up, un-

perceived I am afraid, and it remained in my possession for many years afterwards.

Our course was now directed to Cape Town, where in a few days we duly arrived, and another opportunity was afforded for seeing something new.

Cape Town looked far more homely than anything I had seen since leaving England, and the long line of hansom cabs which were on the stand in the principal street facing the harbour was quite reviving. We were to remain but two days here, but the breeze, coming from a treacherous direction, prevented the steamer coaling, as the barges were not able to come along side with the necessary coal. So we were consequently obliged to remain for some days longer than we expected. This was a "sell" for a number of passengers, who, like myself, had taken advantage of the opportunity of going "ashore;" for we were unable to get back for the same reason that the ship was unable to coal. However, I did not mind adding a few extras to my small outfit, knowing they would probably come in "handy" in the bush.

We made several excursions into the country, visiting, amongst other places, the celebrated wine vaults at Constantia.

We did not, of course, remain long enough to allow one to form much idea of the country, or to make acquaintances amongst those residing in Cape Town. But, if one can judge by an incident that occurred during one of our excursions, the residents at the Cape are decidedly hospitable.

One day we had got some distance on a road leading from the town to the country, when one of the leaders of our "team" was brought to his knees, and was quickly followed by two others. The whole was now a tangled mass, and when we examined the mischief, we found it advisable not to proceed with the same horses. So it was

decided that all our party should return, leading the horses with them, and, if possible, secure fresh animals, I alone remaining, to take charge of the vehicle. I pulled out a cigar to while away the time, but had reckoned without my host, for I found I had no lights. I did not like to give up the idea of my smoke, and seeing a "substantial" looking house a short distance from me, I strolled quietly in that direction with the intention of asking for a light. When I approached nearer the house the door was opened by a nice-looking English servant, who, upon inquiring of her whether she could oblige me with a light, replied, "Please sir, mistress desires me to ask you to walk in and rest yourself; she has seen the accident from the window, the family are just going to dinner, and she hopes you will come in and take a little refreshment." Hallo, I thought to myself, this is better than leading an old broken-kneed horse back to Cape Town, and suits me exactly, so I told the servant to thank her mistress very much for her hospitable invitation, and, giving my name, followed her into the house.

Here I was met by the lady, her husband being absent in the "city," as she called it, and I sat down to a most comfortable dinner, capitally cooked, and served *à l'Anglais*. She gave me an interesting account of all that was to be seen about the neighbourhood, and just as the dinner was being replaced by most enticing looking fruit, we saw from the window my party returning with a fresh team of horses. I stood up to leave, hoping my hostess would excuse my running away, but she would not hear of my deserting the table, until I had tasted both her fruit and wine. Meanwhile, I could perceive my companions looking everywhere for me, and calling and whistling in all directions, till at length, when it became likely they might start without me, a messenger was dispatched to tell them I was comfortably finishing my dinner, and

requesting them to "hold hard" a little, when I would rejoin them, which I did in the course of a short time, first, having thanked my hostess most heartily; secondly, having obtained a light for my cigar, which I now enjoyed with that relish known only to smokers after a good meal.

When I returned I told them of my good fortune, and I think it was agreed on all sides that, as far as I was concerned, the mishap to our "team" was in no way an impediment to the enjoyment of a day's outing from Cape Town.

We eventually got sufficient coals on board to carry us to Melbourne, and next day left for that port. We had been very fortunate in meeting with fine weather since we started, but it was now our turn to see what rough weather really meant. And for some days we had very heavy seas, with waves so high that only one could be seen at a time; but as these seas were not accompanied by very strong winds, the steamer remained pretty dry. However, after a time, we ran into half-gales, and finally into whole ones. The weather now became alarming, and the captain advised the passengers not to remain upon the decks; this all the passengers except a Colonel R——, consented to. On the evening of the day mentioned most of the passengers were stretched upon their berths, finding it the most comfortable place while the tremendous rolling and pitching went on, when suddenly a terrific bump was felt followed by a rush of water, and in an instant the saloon was filled, and the lower berths of all the cabins completely flooded. Screams proceeded from the ladies and children simultaneously. I jumped up, not knowing what was the matter, and supposing each instant we were going to the bottom. The water was rushing up and down the floors, or decks, more strickly speaking, perfectly black; a colour it had assumed in an instant, caused,

as I afterwards discovered, by the smoke and smut which collect upon a steamer. I soon ascertained the cause of the commotion to be what is commonly called "shipping a sea," and a very heavy sea it was. We all now turned out with buckets in assisting to bale the water, which we did in the course of an hour or two, and, on examining the mischief done, we found the cuddy side broken, saloon door completely smashed, &c., &c.; two seamen carried through bulwark-netting, but saved by holding on to frame, and the Colonel had been carried along the decks upon his knees, the cap of one being seriously injured, so much so that he was unable to leave his cabin for the remainder of the voyage.

In due course we arrived in Port Philip. There I said good-bye to most of my fellow-passengers, and went on shore with one or two with whom I had especially made friends, and whose home we had at length reached. I was now to be transferred to another steamer going to Auckland, and had two or three days to remain in Melbourne before proceeding farther.

I was surprised at seeing such a magnificent city, as Melbourne appeared to be, in the Antipodes, and everywhere I went with my Australian friends I met with the greatest kindness and attention. I dined one evening at the Café de Paris, in Burke Street, where an excellent dinner was served. I was told the owner was either Mr. Spiers or Mr. Pond, I do not recollect exactly which; but it was, at all events, one of the partners of the celebrated firm of refreshment contractors (Messrs. Spiers and Pond), now so well and favourably known all over England.

A few days afterwards I embarked on board the steamer which was to take me on to Auckland, well satisfied with what I had seen of Australia, and hopeful of a bright future awaiting me in New Zealand.

CHAPTER V.

Auckland—Meeting a countryman—Government House—Letters of introduction—I set out for the Waikato—An insight into rough life—Wata-Wata—My companions.

IT was dusk when we steamed into Auckland, but with the aid of what little daylight remained, I thought indeed Auckland contrasted very poorly with the great city of Melbourne, which we had left behind. I soon found myself at a hotel, where, after ordering dinner, I sat down to consider the new life that was before me. But little did I then contemplate the difficulties and hardships which I found it necessary, almost immediately, to contend with. Here I was entirely depending on my own exertions, with very little money to commence with—I who had never done any harder or rougher work than a day's hunting or shooting, with a comfortable house and bed to return to after my day's sport. But I did not lose heart at being thus "down in my luck," and remembering that I had brought with me letters of introduction to the Governor, Sir G——, and other important personages in the Island, I determined to present my letters without loss of time, and felt sure I should at least obtain a commission in one of the Waikato regiments, which had been formed to aid the regulars in quelling the war which the Maoris were then waging against the settlers; and with this determination I sat down to my first dinner in New Zealand, deciding to pay my visits early on the morrow.

Having concluded without much loss of time my solitary repast, I lit my pipe, for I could no longer afford cigars, and set out to explore the town. I had not proceeded far before I was surprised at hearing my own name, pronounced in a rich Irish accent which I seemed to recognise, and looking up saw a fine soldierly-looking fellow, dressed in a light cavalry uniform, who caught me by the hand, saying, "Well, old fellow, how are you? what has brought you out here? who'd have thought of seeing you? Come along to my quarters and tell me all the news." These were the remarks he hurried upon me one after the other. I now recognised my countryman M——, whom I had seen in Dublin twelve months before, at which time neither of us had the least intention of leaving the United Kingdom.

We soon reached his quarters. He told me in reply to an inquiry which was puzzling me very much, that the uniform he was wearing was that of the Colonial Defence Force of New Zealand, a light cavalry corps to which he had the honour to belong, and in which regiment he held the important position of "full private." I said I was sorry to find him in the ranks, at which he laughed heartily, and told me that "all the real gentlemen were in the ranks, and that the officers were a very mixed lot; and that as martial law had been proclaimed, all persons under forty years of age were obliged to take service, and the Government could not make them all officers, so they had hit upon the happy expedient of putting the gentlemen in the ranks." The droll way in which he thus explained the reason of his being a full private could hardly be imitated. I assured him I thought all the more of him for commencing at the very beginning of his profession, with the intention, as I had no doubt, of working his way upwards by manly and exemplary conduct; but that I had brought letters of introduction to

the Governor and military secretary, and would endeavour to obtain a commission in his regiment, and then use my influence to have him promoted. No sooner had I delivered this what I considered soothing speech, than he regularly shook with laughter. When he had recovered himself a little, he took me by the hand and said impressively—"Look here, old man, I see you are not alone a 'new chum,' but very green; I would not take command of the regiment to-morrow if it were offered me. I did not come here to turn soldier, but to try and make some money and return to old Ireland as soon as possible to enjoy it. Your letters of introduction will do you no good, you will have to join within forty-eight hours some military corps, and all you will get at Government House when you call to-morrow will be a glass of sherry and a biscuit, if you call about mid-day, and a letter to Colonel ——, who will send you up to the Waikato within twenty-four hours."

Certainly, the impressive manner in which my friend spoke did not reassure me that such would not be the case, but I still had hopes that I should at least succeed in getting a commission. This I told my friend, to which he replied, "Very well, I don't wish to spoil your happy turn of mind, so go, call to-morrow, and then meet me somewhere afterwards and tell me the result." This I promised to do, and wished him good-night.

Sleep soon closed my eyes for that night, and revealed a morning which seemed to me bright and cloudless. When I had finished my breakfast I selected the letters which I intended to present, and made inquiries as to the direction of Government House. The large wooden building, which was at that time the residence of the Governor, was soon pointed out to me, and thither I wended my way. It was now time to make my call, so I presented myself at the House, and sent in my letter of

introduction. I was of course left in a waiting-room until Sir G—— had perused the letter before him. I was then ushered into his august presence. He shook my hand heartily enough, which in itself was reassuring, and asked me what I proposed doing. This I soon explained to him, but he only shook his head, and said he was sorry for it, but he did not think there was a vacant commission in the service at his disposal; but that he would give me a letter to Colonel ——, who no doubt would do the best he could for me; "would I not take a glass of wine or a biscuit" which a footman had just placed on the table; as he thus addressed me I remembered the words of my friend, and now knew they were too true.

Having retired to write a letter to Colonel —— he now returned to the room, handed it to me, and wished me a very good morning, saying he would be glad to see me at any time I chose to honour him by a visit. I did not tell him I myself had also another letter to this very same Colonel.

I left Government House not altogether disheartened, as I had not a positive refusal, and I still had my own private introduction to the great Colonel; but if I was not a sadder I certainly was a wiser man, for my eyes were beginning to be opened to what I must expect to meet with for the future.

It was too early to keep my appointment with my friend, so I set out to call on the Colonel, determined to know my fate at once.

I found the Colonel at home. He told me he was glad I had lost no time in calling on him, as otherwise he would have been obliged to send for me; that there was a party under Lieutenant W—— starting next morning for the Waikato, and that he had included my name in the list of those to accompany him. This officer was to be stationed at Wata-Wata, where he was to survey

sections for military settlers, to be handed over to them after the war as a reward for their services. I was to be his assistant, and he desired me to call upon Lieutenant W—— at once and report myself.

This I did accordingly, and before I left that gentleman I had completed all arrangements for joining him in the morning, in order to set out with him and some others for the Waikato.

I then kept the appointment with my friend, and found him waiting for me. I stated all that had occurred, at which he did not seem surprised, merely remarking, "I told you so!" We then spent the remainder of the day together, and enjoyed ourselves as best we could, for indeed Auckland was a dreary place at that time, with nothing but military to be seen. We dined together, and ordered the best dinner we could devise, as he assured me, what I afterwards learned by experience, that I should get nothing fit to eat till my return.

The time soon arrived for making a start. I rose in good time, and had some hot coffee. When I arrived at Lieutenant W——'s quarters I found everything in readiness, and we at once set out on our journey. The first part of our road for twenty miles was performed on foot; we halted half way and dined, our dinner consisting of bread, cheese, and rum. Lieutenant W—— had been an old settler in Australia, and was a surveyor by profession. He was a very jolly old fellow, and seemed to appreciate his rum-and-water, more rum than water. He elected to walk with me, as I had been brought under his especial notice, on account of my introductions. He told me I was to have five shillings a day pay, and would be found in bed and board, that I was also to have a bottle of rum per week, &c., &c. This seemed very good, but I had to learn yet what bed and board really meant. Upon our arrival at the Waikato we found a small river steamer

in readiness to convey us to our destination. There seemed to be a good many soldiers going by the same steamer; in fact, more than it appeared to me there would be room for, and as we were to spend a day and night on board, it certainly did not look inviting. However, we did manage somehow to fit on board, and we were soon steaming up the river. It was a lovely day, and certainly the broad expansive waters of the Waikato, surrounded by such wild mountainous scenery as I had never seen before, looked splendid, and I felt as "happy as a sandboy."

The current in the river was very strong, which of course rendered our progress slow. The actual distance we had to make was not very great, but then we had a good many *roundings* to make up for. I spent several hours admiring the beautiful scenery we were passing through, every portion of which was new to me. At length dinner hour arrived, when we were served with roast beef and potatoes, and any beer we chose to pay for. We were to arrive at the junction of the two rivers, the Waikato and Waipa, before dusk, and here we were to pass the night, as the steamer would proceed no farther until daylight. At this place there was a small Maori village called Ngarawahia, and here we were either to attempt to find beds or to "camp out." As soon as we arrived, which we did in course of time, we proceeded to select a place to encamp for the night. We lighted a fire, and then each of the party got a quantity of dry ferns for bedding purposes upon which to pass the night under the canopy of heaven, Lieutenant W—— camping amongst us. We spent our evening round the fire, chatting and smoking, and before "turning in" I think we had all become pretty much at home with one another. With the exception of Lieutenant W——, myself, and another, the remainder of the party were of the labouring class; this I thought was rather fortunate for Lieutenant W——,

who had contracted with the Government for the work, and had to pay his own men. Next morning we arose, and the weather being warm, we determined on bathing in the river to prepare and refresh ourselves before proceeding on our journey, and as it was the only means of procuring "a wash." After this we returned on board the steamer, where we breakfasted and resumed our journey, and in the course of about three hours duly arrived at our destination, Wata-Wata.

Having landed our stores and worldly goods, we proceeded next to select a "camping-ground." While searching for this we came across a good substantial wooden shed, which had evidently been erected to accommodate the workmen of what had once been a sawpit close by; of this we were informed we might take possession if we chose, and it was agreed between us that at all events for the present we should not pitch our tents but occupy the wooden building. We each then selected our sleeping space, and proceeded as before to cut a sufficient quantity of ferns for our beds, as our entire sleeping furniture consisted of whatever blankets or rugs we had carried with us. One of our party was to be appointed cook and "campkeeper," week about, and the first choice fell upon a German. His duty was to prepare our meals, which consisted of boiling a piece of salt-beef or pork until he thought it sufficiently soft to get a fork into, which was a signal that the feast was prepared. He had also to make "damper," *i.e.* flour and water baked in the ashes, and tea or coffee. Our bill of fare never varied for weeks together—hot salt junk and damper for dinner, cheese and damper for mid-day, and cold salt junk and damper for breakfast.

"Beef hot, beef cold,
Beef salt, beef old,
Beef hard, beef tough,
The Lord be thanked, we've had enough."

The cook had also to wash up the things, which was not a very formidable operation, as each man had but one plate, a tin pannikin, and a knife and fork, the latter of which we easily prepared for re-use by sticking them in the ground and pulling them out again. When night came it brought with it millions upon millions of mosquitoes, which almost drove a "new chum" like myself mad. I endeavoured to keep them away by smoking, but it was no go. At length it became important, as we had to set to work in the morning at daylight, to try and procure a little rest, but no rest was to be had, as these horrible mosquitoes followed us there also. I endeavoured to cover my head in order to keep off my tormentors, but the suffocating heat was worse still. What was to be done? I could not get to sleep, do what I would. And it seemed as if the mosquitoes were biting through the blankets. These intruders I discovered not to be mosquitoes but innumerable fleas, which infested the dry fern and sand. At length, wearied and worn out, I fell asleep, and when at length daylight appeared, it was truly welcome, and, as we were not far from the river, we all proceeded as before to bathe. This was refreshing after being tormented and bitten all night through. But even here we were not free from insects, for the banks of the river, and indeed almost every place, was covered with swarms of sand-flies, a little hard, black insect, whose bite is very sore and inflammatory. They do not rise far from the ground as a rule, so it was our feet and ankles which suffered most.

I now was beginning to receive a practical lesson in "roughing it," which was far different in practice from what it seemed in theory; and I thought what a goose I had made of myself by not being more industrious when at home and thus have avoided all this misery. After partaking of hot coffee and salt beef and damper, I

brought out my blanket to stretch it in the sun, in order that the fleas might have an opportunity of making their escape, and I believe a good many of them took advantage of this, as I only counted ninety-six which I caught before giving it up as a bad job. Oh, what was to be done with these wretched fleas? I was told I must not leave my blanket out, as directly the sun went down a little, the blue-bottle came and would "fly-blow" it all over. It seemed the insects were to have it all their own way, and that we were simply living stores of animal food sent up the Waikato to be eaten up not by the Maoris, but by mosquitoes, sand-flies, and innumerable hosts of other insects, with the miserable satisfaction alone remaining that they were in turn tormented, for

> "Little fleas have less fleas,
> To bother and to bite them,
> While less fleas have lesser fleas,
> And so *ad infinitum*."

CHAPTER VI.

Our first day—At work—Discontentment—Promotion—Pig dogs and pig-sticking—The hunt—Other game—Vegetables—Thistle tops—Incident of the eel-net—Formidable Maoris—Anecdote of the old Scotch whaler—My new purchase—Pleasant rides—The horse stolen—Singular recovery of same—A narrow and fortunate escape—Thank God!

THE greater part of our first day was passed in getting in a quantity of firewood, and in taking a sort of general survey of the country in which we were about to commence our work. We were pleasantly situated upon the banks of the river Waipa. Wata-Wata had evidently once been a thriving Maori village, for everywhere were to be seen indications of the rude agriculture which had been carried on by the natives before the intrusion of the white settlers.

There was a good deal of heavy timber close about our encampment, and also plenty of peach-trees, but the greater portion of the country was open and thickly overgrown with ferns. It was well watered, with streams, which did not, however, produce any kind of fish that I am aware of, except eels. These streams are generally found running through deep gullies, which are filled with water and assume the dimensions of good-sized rivers in the rainy season.

We found one or two good springs of water close to our tent, and this, with our limitless supply of firewood, made our position a decidedly well-chosen one.

Next day, at daylight, again we rose, and after a dip in the river and some hot coffee and damper, we set out to commence our first day's work, each of us carrying an axe and fernhook. Lieutenant W—— soon set us to work to clear our boundary line. For this purpose we had a good deal of heavy bush cutting, and I must say I found it no easy work, unaccustomed as I had previously been to real hard work. After we had worked for half a day I felt very much done up, and was not sorry when the time arrived for our mid-day "feed;" not because I was hungry, but because I was very tired, and my hands were much blistered from using the heavy axe.

We selected a shady spot on the banks of a small stream of beautiful clear fresh water, and were soon hard at work upon our damper and cheese. When we had concluded this we were each served with a little rum. This was produced from a soda-water bottle, each of us getting two letters, according to the indentation of the words "soda water" upon the glass bottle, the last man being allowed three letters, as, when his turn came, we had arrived at the narrow or end portion of the bottle. After this we had a smoke and "forty winks," and then work was again resumed. There was no use in attempting to shirk work, as each two men had an allotted portion, which they were expected to complete before the day was over; and if each did not bear his fair share it would be impossible for one workman to complete the given task.

These operations were repeated from day to day, and I soon became accustomed to the work, and found myself quite as useful as my fellow-labourers; but then I must say it did not exactly suit my taste, nor could I bring myself to believe I should ever make my fortune in that state of life for which I had now been selected. So I determined to write to Sir G——, the Governor, and ask him to get me something to do more congenial to my

tastes, as I found the work of my present appointment altogether too laborious and unprofitable.

In about a fortnight after dispatching this letter, I received his reply. It was couched in language of kindness and civility, explaining the impossibility of his procuring for me at present anything else to do, and assuring me that he had not forgotten me and would, upon an opportunity occurring, appoint me to something better.

There was nothing for it therefore but to continue in my present position until such a time as fortune chose to smile more favourably upon me. Meanwhile I determined to do my best, and in a short time Lieutenant W—— found me so useful to him that he was able to intrust me with the direction of the work and to remain at home himself, arranging his field-books and making his plans, and I was now promoted and my pay increased to 7s. 6d. per diem. I now felt much more satisfied with my position, and as we extended our area of operations and got farther into the bush, life became much more endurable; and amongst other things we discovered that there were numbers of wild pigs about, which would afford us both recreation and fresh provisions.

The wild pig of New Zealand is not indigenous to the country. It has been produced from the tame species, which had been left to become wild. They are chiefly to be found in the neighbourhood of swamps and the scrub adjacent. They are shy, and possess a wonderfully keen sense of hearing. They are therefore very difficult to approach, and are indeed not often seen, except when pursued by dogs.

It was necessary now to procure dogs, and for this purpose I visited a village occupied by friendly Maoris, and purchased from them two fine animals. These dogs are of the bull breed, but are as large as what is known as the

butchers' dog. They follow by scent the pig, which, when they overtake, they seize by the ear; to this appendage they adhere with wonderful tenacity and determination. It is then necessary for the hunter to approach, and catching the pig by the hind leg, to throw it upon its back, when with a long sheath-knife it is dispatched. The dogs, meantime, never once let go the grip they first secure, nor do they yet relax their hold until the animal has ceased to struggle and is quite dead.

Each Saturday our labours ceased at twelve o'clock, so for the remainder of the day we amused ourselves in any manner we chose. We soon gave our dogs an opportunity of showing us what they could do, and I must say they did not disappoint us. We had, during our progress in the bush, observed all the best places where we had met with pig tracks, and we were enabled at once to place our dogs on good ground. We chose a very large swamp, where the surrounding country was scrubby and not heavily timbered. Half-a-dozen were quickly seen to be in alarm, although the dogs were quite silent; but as I have said, these animals have very sharp ears. In the course of the afternoon we killed a couple, which, after cutting into portions, we divided between us and returned to camp, well pleased with the prospect of having pork cutlets for breakfast.

We enjoyed our breakfast very much, and for some days we had this wild pork cooked in all manner of ways, *i.e.* baked, boiled, and fried. The flesh was very dark, and tasted like mutton; it had almost the effect of medicine on us at first, but in the course of time we became accustomed to it.

There was very little other game to be met with. A few ducks might sometimes be shot upon the river or in the lagoons in the immediate vicinity; there was also a kind of large water-rail—the Weka (*Orydromus Australis*)

and some black parrots—the Kaka (*Nestor Hypopolius*)—the latter of which were very difficult to approach.

We found it no easy matter to procure vegetables, the only description we had hitherto been able to obtain being a kind of thistle, the young shoots of which produced a substitute for cabbage, when "boiled to distraction;" but I had discovered that in some of the Maori villages which had been burned down and deserted crops of potatoes had been left, the stalks only having been destroyed by the flames, so I determined to take a spade and get some.

Accordingly, taking advantage of the first opportunity which presented, and accompanied by one of my companions, we set out after our day's work.

Upon reaching the potato ground we soon filled our bag, and were preparing to return home, when we were attracted by seeing an eel-net which hung upon the gable of a house which had escaped the general destruction. We approached more closely to examine it, thinking if it were perfect it would be useful to us. This we now ascertained to be the case, and we were proceeding to appropriate the property, when out of the house came three Maoris, dressed in the primitive rush-mat, which denoted that they belonged to no friendly tribe. My companion, who was carrying the sack of potatoes, immediately let it drop and took to his heels, and, seemingly to the amusement of the natives, had soon put a considerable distance between him and us. I was not so fortunate, as I was at once surrounded and given to understand by signs that I was required inside. There was nothing for it but to stay, and I therefore made a virtue of necessity and entered.

A most savoury perfume greeted my entrance, which I soon perceived arose from a large dish of eels and potatoes which evidently formed the supper of my captors. I had serious misgivings, upon my entry, that I was not in safe company, but this alarm was a little dispelled by an invi-

tation which was now given to me by signs to join in the repast. This I accordingly did, not so much with a relish for the appearance of the food, but from a fear that any reluctance upon my part might annoy them, and thus hasten my own destruction, which I felt sure would ultimately take place; so I put my hand into the dish (for there were no knives, forks, or spoons) and commenced what I looked upon as my last supper. The repast was ended by the dish being emptied, and I waited with anxiety the next move. The Maoris carried on a most lively conversation, in which they were very noisy and demonstrative, the purport of which I was quite ignorant of, as they spoke in their own language. Meanwhile, I filled my pipe and commenced to smoke, as was my habit after meals, and as the Maoris were about to follow my example, I handed them my tobacco-pouch to fill their pipes from. This they accepted, and we were soon all smoking together. I next produced the celebrated soda-water bottle, which had served us on so many occasions at our mid-day repast, and having taken a good pull at it, passed it to my captors, who, after some little hesitation, probably doubting my honesty, each in succession partook of some of the spirit, which they seemed to relish very considerably; and it appeared to produce rather a soothing effect upon them —so much so that I mustered sufficient courage to get up from the floor where I was sitting and to walk to the door, through which I now passed without any hindrance. Seeing that this was so, and after hesitating for a moment, I picked up the sack of potatoes and the spade, and set off in the direction of our camp, still unperceived. I had now got some distance upon my road, and felt pretty safe, as I had a good revolver with me, and would of course, had I been pursued, soon have let fall my spade and potatoes and given them leg-bail.

But they did not, as far as I could perceive from look-

ing back from time to time, appear to have taken the least notice of my departure, and as I had adopted the precaution of leaving both the remainder of my spirits and tobacco behind me, probably they imagined I should return; but I need hardly remark, if so, they never were more mistaken in their lives.

There now remained little more than one mile to be accomplished between me and our camp, when my attention was directed to the sound of voices and the tramping of feet approaching, which I at once recognised as a small detachment of soldiers, accompanied by my late precipitate companion, who had reported a dreadful story of my death and mutilation. I replied that I had merely partaken of the hospitality of some Maoris, who had invited me to supper. The officer was much astonished at the evidently altered account he received from me, and, on my suggestion, did not continue his march farther. On my return I told them all that had taken place, and was much amused to hear of the dreadful account that was given by my companion as to my fate, which was as follows. After having filled our sack with the coveted potatoes, we were about to return, when we were set upon by an armed body of Maoris, who had evidently come down from the hills for the purpose of securing a supply of fish. My friend had fought bravely side by side with me, inflicting considerable injury upon the enemy, but being at last overpowered, was obliged to leave me to my fate, wounded as I was, an opportunity occurring for his own escape.

With this story he reached the military encampment. The party I have described were then on their way to endeavour to rescue me or to take, should they be fortunate enough to come up with them, summary vengeance for my murder.

There can be very little doubt, however, that I had a most fortunate escape, and that they were no other than a

foraging party of warlike Maoris, who had been detached in order to secure fish, as there is no doubt the main body were in great distress and need; and were it not for a certain amount of composure and a large amount of good fortune on my part, it is unlikely my friend would have been so suddenly transformed from a hero to a story-teller. The potatoes turned out very good. They were somewhat different from the ordinary potatoes usually met with, being of a purple colour throughout and having a sweeter taste. They are peculiar to New Zealand, I have been told. They gave a considerable relish to our "salt junk" as long as they lasted, but it was with the greatest difficulty I was able to prevail upon the others of our party to allow our now crest-fallen companion to share with us what he had been voted unworthy of.

We had now completed at least one-half of our work, having been very nearly three months at Wata-Wata, and it was necessary for us to move our camp a little nearer the work. We therefore selected another position about five miles from the river, inland. Here we built ourselves a hut of trees and rushes. Our position was chosen with a view of being accessible to the military road, and we selected a sheltered spot where plenty of good water was at hand.

There was only one house within sight of us, and that appeared to be inhabited by a Maori family. The first day we set to work revealed the occupants to us. Lieutenant W—— was setting out a long boundary line with his theodolite, and I was taking his signals from him, when I was approached by an old man with a long white beard, and some half-dozen tall, stalwart-looking young Maoris. He at once told me to desist, in very queer English, which I of course refused to do. He then told me he was the owner of the land, and that he would not have it surveyed or anything else by a parcel of "robbers" like us. I quickly replied that I had my orders and

intended to carry them out, at the same time producing my revolver, for the whole party were coming round me and looking very angry. When he saw this he grew more peaceable, and I was the first to speak. I said, "Who are you? You appear to speak more like a Scotchman than a New Zealander." "Yes," he said, "I am a Scotchman. I wandered up here fifty years ago, having been cast ashore at the mouth of the Waikato River from a Dundee whaler. I married a Maori woman, the daughter of a king, and the owner of all this land. These are some of my sons, and if all the others were here, and we chose, it is very small work we would make of you and your party, notwithstanding all those trinkets you have with you," pointing to my revolver. I remarked to him that he must have had a very numerous family, when he assured me he had no less than twenty-two alive—seventeen sons and five daughters.

By this time the remainder of our party and Lieutenant W—— had joined us, perceiving, as they of course had done, that I was in trouble, and in a very short time we had smoothed all difficulties and had become great friends, having assured him that we were merely making a survey of his property, to show the Government those places which they must not encroach upon; and ever after this incident we maintained the greatest friendship with the old Scotch whaler.

I was anxious to see as much of the Waikato as possible while I was obliged to be there, and as we had a great deal of hard work before us yet, there was not much likelihood of our getting through it for several months to come. My pay had been accumulating; besides, I had some little money of my own still left. The difficulty I had was to find time for making expeditions beyond the limits of our encampment. There were several regiments quartered about us, some of the officers of which I had known at home, but they were all out of reach for walk-

ing, at least for one who could only get away from Saturday till Monday; so I determined to purchase a horse. I discovered at a small settlement where a detachment of Waikato militia were quartered, a suitable animal—*i.e.* there was not much choice about it. The price asked was £30, including an old saddle and bridle. This sum I agreed to give, and after passing a night at the camp I set out home, quite pleased with my investment.

There was plenty of good grass all round our hut, and I built a small shed to act as a stable; I also managed to get some Indian corn from our friend the old Scotch whaler. I had always been fond of horses, and although this animal was immeasurably inferior to anything I had ever before put my legs across, still it afforded me a great deal of amusement and pleasure. I made many expeditions upon him to deserted and inhabited Maori settlements, and spent some pleasant days with my friends at the different military stations, which otherwise I could not have reached.

One day, however, I thought I had irretrievably lost my horse. I had "tethered" him out in an excellent bit of feeding during my absence at work. Upon my return he was nowhere to be found. When we reached our hut I ascertained from the cook that a soldier of artillery had called during the day, returning to Te Amutu, being absent without leave, and that he had requested a loan of the horse, being dead-tired, and having twenty-five miles to perform to complete his journey. The "loan" of course was refused him, but there could be no doubt he had taken it. Upon hearing this I determined to set out after him, and if possible, recover my horse, and having obtained leave from Lieutenant W——, I started, carrying my saddle and bridle with me. I did not know the "track" very well, and what I did know of it extended only three or four miles. I did not expect to walk very quickly, leaving at

that hour, first because I was rather tired after my usual hard day's work, and secondly because it was a rather dark night. I did, however, manage to push ahead pretty well, and before midnight I am sure I left some fifteen or sixteen good miles behind me; but I had now come to a part of the road where several paths broke off in many directions, and growing confused, I thought I had better wait until daylight before deciding which I should take. Accordingly I selected a nice sheltered spot, and getting together half-a-dozen armfuls of "tea-tree," a kind of heather-broom which grows in gullies and elsewhere through the Waikato, I made myself a good fire, and with my saddle for a pillow, I was soon in a profound sleep.

The sun must have been up for some time before I awakened. My fire had completely burned out. I felt very much refreshed; quite as much, if not more so, than I have often been after an amount of similar exertion, when my rest has been taken on a luxurious couch, and I proceeded upon my journey. After walking about two hours, I came to a tolerably habitable-looking dwelling, which displayed the usual sign of being a store. Here I entered, determined to test what it contained and to make inquiries regarding the subject of my journey. I ordered some sardines, biscuit, and native beer, and while these were being got ready I asked the host whether he had seen anything of a soldier on horseback without a saddle pass that way, to which inquiry he replied "he had, late last night; that he had slept there and had only just departed, leaving the horse behind him, which he (the host) had been directed to restore to any person who might turn up and claim it, and whose description he should consider genuine, and who would also pay for the soldier's bed and breakfast and the horse's keep."

I soon satisfied the storekeeper that the horse belonged to me, and having assured him of my willingness to defray

the expenses he mentioned, he declared the animal to be at my service whenever I felt disposed to proceed on my journey.

I explained to him I had now accomplished the object of my search, and would take my time. I had secured two days' leave, so determined not to return to camp till next day, but to visit Te Amutu, some two miles distant, where a friend of mine was quartered with the 65th Regiment. On reaching my friend's quarters, he was much amused by my account of the night I had passed. He wished me to complain to the authorities, but this I would not do, as I did not wish the poor soldier to be punished, when it was evident his intention was only to continue on horseback a journey which he found it impossible further to pursue on foot, and he had not hurt or overridden the horse, having merely made a bit and reins of "green flax" and placed his coat for a saddle in order to save my horse's back.

When I returned to camp Lieutenant W—— congratulated me on the recovery of my horse, and we kept a better look-out when we "tethered" him for the future.

We had any amount of "pig-sticking" all round our new quarters, and very fine fat ones we used to get. It was rather a wild kind of situation we had selected; nevertheless, it was most convenient for the work we had to do, being near to it. We had made considerable progress in laying out one hundred acre sections, but there was a good deal of regular hard, heavy timber cutting to be got through yet.

Lieutenant W—— had not appeared lately in very good spirits, and one day, when he received his letters, he was worse than usual, and when I asked what was annoying him, he told me that for some time he had suspected the Government to be going ahead too quickly and spending too much money, laying out sections, &c., for settlers, until the Waikato was more peaceable and ready to receive

them; he did not think they would be able to find any more money to carry on their works, and that he had just been refused by the commissariat any further provisions upon the order of the Surveyor-General. Here was a dilemma! These supplies had as it were kept us together. What was to be done? I volunteered to go to Auckland to explain the matter, and Lieutenant W—— accepted my offer. I was to ride my horse to the junction of the rivers at Ngaruawahia, and there leave him until Lieutenant W—— fetched or sent for him, and then proceed to Auckland.

On the way to Auckland I met a friend going my way, Captain B——. We had a very pleasant journey down, stopping one night half-way at a snug little road-side inn, where a stout old English woman made us so comfortable that we could not resist remaining another day. Upon my arrival in Auckland I reported the matter to the proper quarter, and orders were issued, which entirely relieved my late companions from the interdict they had been threatened with. I had obtained a fortnight's leave, so was in no hurry to return; but before many days had elapsed, I received the sad news that the whole of our party and another party a few miles off, had been foully murdered by the Maoris, Lieutenant W—— alone escaping this dreadful fate, having gone to Ngaruawahia to bring back my horse. This was sad news indeed, and it was sometime before I could realise the dreadful reality of it. However, the horrible truth was soon confirmed, and finally, Lieutenant W—— arrived himself in Auckland, the bearer of full details, which amounted to this; that upon riding up to his late encampment, he found every soul had been tomahawked.

Thus sadly ended my first employment in New Zealand, and I did not neglect to thank God most heartily for the mercy he had vouchsafed in thus sparing my life.

CHAPTER VII.

Auckland again—Society—Old friends—Funds low—A certain young lady—The Hokitika gold-fields—Bad tidings—The *Elphin Queen*—Keeping the crew in spirits—The purser of the mail-steamer—A distinguished party—Sydney—A hard-hearted landlady—Sunday—"Wanted, a Barman"—The Freemason Hotel—Mary—The shipwreck—Letters of introduction—Morning drams—Saturday evening—Pretty girls—Mary's lovers.

THE city of Auckland seemed to be considerably more crowded than when I at first arrived. I do not know whether this was caused by a relaxation in the martial law which had made so many unwilling soldiers, or whether a great influx of new arrivals had lately taken place. But be the cause what it may, it certainly did appear to have become a much more flourishing city.

I had been absent eight months, during which time I had scarcely seen my own face; no wonder, therefore, if I was glad to find myself once more within a circle of civilisation. I soon made some acquaintances, with whom I occasionally spent my evenings. I also met several old friends, young fellows whom I had known in London, and whom I was not surprised to meet again in New Zealand, as I always thought they were going "a little too fast." We had a very jolly time together: we all seemed to have a little money somehow; even my Hibernian friend M——, whom I had met on my first arrival, and we appeared all to be of the same opinion, viz., that we were bound to enjoy ourselves after our hard work.

But, in the course of time, it began clearly to be demonstrated that our supplies were diminishing, and that it was high time we were looking out once more for something to do. I had been paying, perhaps, a little too much attention to a certain young lady, who was very fond of riding. When I first broke the news that she must lose me as an escort she appeared disappointed, but next day by the side of the fair but false one, I saw my place occupied by another.

About this time, the great Hokitika gold-fields had been discovered, and large numbers of people were leaving Auckland and all parts of the country to try their fortune on the new fields. The accounts from those who had already arrived were most promising and reassuring, and thither several of us made up our minds to go. How to get there was the question; it was a long way off, and travelling in New Zealand was most expensive, and none of us were in funds.

Some dreadful murders had been perpetrated by a band of Germans, who had taken up a position of interception, in order to waylay travellers on their way to the diggings; and a great deal of indignation and bitterness of feeling was expressed against the offenders, and several parties were organized to capture them. But before this was effected, as it ultimately was, a great deal of mischief had already taken place. We thought at first of taking the road, but the diggings being in the Southern Island, this was not exactly feasible. However, a splendid opportunity occurred which offered us a free passage to Hokitika, in a small trading vessel, named the *Elphin Queen*, which had been chartered by a young friend of ours as a speculation, to take down a cargo of flour and potatoes for sale amongst the diggers; we were merely to lend a hand to work the vessel in return for our passage.

Nothing could have suited us better than this generous offer, and four of us determined to go. We soon got

ready the few things we required. In fact we had not much to prepare, and an evening was fixed to meet our captain at dinner. He was a tall "groggy-looking" young man, and after dinner he smoked, and drank glass after glass of grog, until I should have thought he never could have found his way on board that night, and perhaps I was right. However, he told us we should make a first-rate crew, and all we should require was a few bottles of spirits. These he insisted upon our bringing, so it was resolved with only one dissentient, viz., myself, that we would take on board for our own use a small cask of rum, to keep the crew in spirits, across the bar. I was put down as a humbug, and all sorts of things, for being so disagreeable as to vote against it; but I was overruled, and the cask was to be bought. I was asked to state my reasons for my opposition, which I accordingly did. They were these: I had not myself been brought up to the sea, nor had I any experience in the management of ships, and, under these circumstances, I thought it would be wiser and safer for us not to muddle ourselves with grog, while as amateurs we were endeavouring to work and bring our craft safely to harbour. The captain said "this was all bosh," and that we might trust ourselves to him, so I determined not to accompany the expedition, and having thus made up my mind we parted company, and I wandered down town.

While sitting in the billiard-room of a hotel, I met the purser of one of the mail-steamers running between Auckland and Sydney, and to him I told my story, and asked his advice. He replied that he considered I was quite right in not going with them, and if I wished to accept a passage in his vessel, which would sail next morning, he would land me at Sydney, where I was sure at once to fall upon my legs. I thanked him very much for his kind offer, which I at once accepted.

Next morning early I called upon my friends, whom I found still in bed, and wished them good-bye, without, however, rubbing noses, Maori fashion, even now faltering in my decision, for I did not like separating from them. But there was no time to be lost, and they were all too sleepy to say much. I next found myself and my portmanteau on board the mail-steamer bound for Sydney, N.S.W.

We had a most distinguished party on board.—General —— was leaving New Zealand, having failed, with ten thousand regular troops at his command, to annihilate the Maoris, and the New Zealand Government were about to take the responsibility of making peace with the Maori race, which they shortly afterwards succeeded tolerably well in doing.

Sydney, as seen from one of the finest harbours in the world, certainly looked a land of promise, and now that I had set foot upon terra firma, it even appeared to be a still greater place. Everything looked as busy on the wharves and landing places as they did in Dublin, Liverpool, or any other shipping ports which I had seen at home, and I felt I should have little difficulty in getting on here.

I had a few pounds remaining, and my allowance would be due in three months, so I hoped to be able to manage. I was taken by a respectable-looking individual, who met me on the deck of the steamer, to what he described as a most comfortable boarding-house. Here I took up my quarters for the present. It was Saturday when I arrived, and the next day, Sunday, I went to church. There, for the first time since I left home, I heard our beautiful Protestant service, and I do not know that anything I had heard or seen gave me such real pleasure as it did, bringing back to memory happy days of childhood. There I heard the same words, and the same hymns sung, I had joined in so often at home.

There I was reminded of the dear cousins I had left in the old country, and of whom I was so truly fond, and I thanked God from my heart for all His mercies to me, and prayed that He might continue to guide and direct me.

Since this period, and even before it, I have roughed it a good deal, but I have never yet once forgotten that in every path of life we owe all good fortune to God. He takes care of us, if we call upon Him truly, and has never been known to desert those who do not desert Him. Of all the hundreds of young men I have met, who have been cast upon the world like myself, without a profession and without means, I have never known an instance of a really genuine good fellow who was ashamed to say his prayers, and on the other hand I never met a scoffer who was either contented or successful in life.

At the end of my first week I was presented with a most exorbitant account by my landlady. I expostulated, but she insisted; so there was nothing for it but to pay an amount more than double what I could have conceived my expenses to be. This placed me in a dilemma, for I had no more money left, and had calculated on being able to hold out at least another week, in the meantime looking for something to do. My landlady noticing my embarrassment thus addressed me, "I hope you have plenty of money, otherwise this is not the house for you, so you had better find new quarters where you are not known." This was adding insult to injury, so I told her, but it was no use, she did not care. But after some little time she agreed to allow me to remain three days, in hopes that by that time I should get employment, and a sufficient advance to repay her.

But although I tried hard for everything which was advertised in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, butchers' boys, strikers at blacksmiths, light porters, &c., &c., I could not obtain any employment, so that at the end of three

days I was told I could not, or need not, return there that night, and that my portmanteau and contents would remain as security for the debt I had incurred.

I did not know what to do now. I was in a most awkward predicament indeed; no money, no home, no effects; what was to be done? I tried an agent, but he would not put my name on his books for less than 7s. 6d., so that was no go. At length my eye rested upon an advertisement which I thought I would answer.

"Wanted a barman; apply this day between nine and ten A.M., at the Freemason's Hotel, York Street." What was the time? I looked at a clock, and found it wanted twenty minutes to ten. I hurried in the direction of York Street, and in less than six minutes had arrived in front of the hotel, where in large letters was written, "Freemason's Hotel. Bradford, Proprietor." There were at least twenty others waiting, having also called in answer to the advertisement. I entered, and asked a very pretty girl, behind a neat looking bar, whether I could see the proprietor. "The proprietor, Mr. Bradford," she replied, "was at breakfast, and would be down directly." Would I not take a seat? and could she not "serve me with something?" The former invitation I accepted, the latter I declined for two reasons, first, because I had no money, and second because, even if I had, I did not think it would look well for a barman in embryo; not that they mind these things much in Australia. So I thanked her, and said that I had come in answer to an advertisement in the morning paper, and wished to obtain the situation. At this she laughed, and with a pleasant Irish accent, desired me "not to be quizzing her;" that she well knew from my appearance I was no barman, but looked more like a "soldier officer." However, as my business was serious, I tried at once to undeceive her by telling her she was partly right, but that I was very hard up, and hoped

she would try and get me the place, or else I did not know what I should do. The solemn way I said all this seemed to impress her, for she at once told me to wait while she went up-stairs to speak to the master. She soon returned, smiling and pleased, and informed me that master would be down and would see me directly. "Don't say too much for yourself," was the warning she gave me. In this advice she was safe, as I am afraid I had little to recommend me for such a situation. But she remarked, "No doubt I had been in plenty of bars, and knew all about it, from observing what took place."

Presently the old landlord entered, and then there was a commotion amongst the large number of applicants, who had by this time congregated. "Mary," said he, "send the first applicant into my office." "Yes, sir," she replied, and I was desired to enter.

"Who are you?" said the landlord, "and what do you want?"

"I have come," I replied, "in answer to your advertisement in this morning's paper."

"Very good," said he. "And what can you do?"

"I trust, sir, you will find me fully able for the duties you require, and I shall do my best to give you satisfaction," I replied.

"Have you had much experience in the capacity of barman?" he asked.

"No, but I have been many times at a bar, and can well understand what I shall be expected to do," was my answer.

"Very well; you will do; come here in an hour. Wages £2 per week, with pint of ale or glass of spirits per day. What's your name?"

"Thomas," I replied.

"Very well, Thomas; come in an hour and I will see you again." I then thanked him and withdrew.

When passing through the bar I had just time to speak a few words to Mary, and to tell her I was engaged. She said she was very glad indeed to hear of it, and told me I would have to work hard, but that she would assist me as much as she could.

On reaching my lodgings I told my landlady the good fortune which had befallen me, but she would not believe it, and said I was trying to gammon her, and that I must pay for my three days' board before she could let me have my portmanteau. I am sorry to say I here lost my temper, and going into the room which I had occupied I there saw my things undisturbed, and after a deal of quarrelling I packed up, at the same time selecting a few things which I insisted on taking with me, and, locking my portmanteau, put the key in my pocket, promising in a few days when I had made some money to see her again.

It happened that the proprietor of the hotel was a great man in Sydney this year, being Lord Mayor elect; and he was driving a rattling trade. His friends were determined to show their appreciation of him by drinking as often as possible his jolly good health, under his own roof and in his own liquor.

He was a vulgar old fellow, but a first-rate business man, so he was not long in setting me to work. He showed me the whisky, the gin, the brandy, the rum, the shrub, and the taps, and told me to charge sixpence per nobbler (Australian for glass) for all spirits; sixpence for ginger-beer, lemonade, and soda-water, and threepence per pint for colonial swipes or beer. I was to get up at five A.M. every morning, as customers called at that house for their morning drams, and I could retire when the house was closed.

I soon got my instructions, and he then left me with Mary, who he said would be able to tell me anything I did not know.

Customers soon came, and in a short time, in fact before that day had passed over, I was quite *au fait* at my new duties, which I continued to perform with much satisfaction to Mr. Bradford.

I had a comfortable bed and plenty of good food, but the long hours were very trying, and soon began to tell upon me.

I procured my portmanteau, and was thus enabled to make myself tolerably comfortable. When I had been there about a month, a young fellow whom I had known in Auckland entered the bar. He was an officer on board a ship from Auckland, which was then in harbour. Upon seeing me he exclaimed, "You lucky fellow! I thought you had gone to Hokitika in the *Elphin Queen;* she has been lost at the bar, and all hands with her."

My reader may readily imagine the effect of these words upon me, I who only by the merest chance had altered my intention of sailing in this ill-fated vessel. Here, again, I had narrowly escaped death. My friend soon gave me all the particulars which he had heard. The non-arrival of the little vessel at Hokitika had caused considerable alarm. Nothing was heard of her for some weeks, until another ship on the same course picked up, on her journey down, close to the bar of Hokitika, a portion of the shattered hull with the name *Elphin Queen* painted upon it. This told the story of shipwreck, and nothing more was ever heard of the unfortunate crew.

How thankful I felt that I had had sufficient resolution and discretion remaining to discern the danger and folly of an inexperienced crew, setting out with a preconceived determination to pass their evenings in revelry, when it would have required the whole of their energies and power to work the little ship! No doubt the disputed cask of rum was the cause of all the mischief. Here were three young gentlemen, all of good family, who had gone to New

Zealand in search of fortune, now no more. It was indeed sad. I do not know whether steps were ever taken to report the occurrence to their families at home, nor can I say whether any one in Auckland was aware of the address of their relatives. One of them I had myself met in London, previously to meeting him in New Zealand. His name was Benjamin A——; he had at one time been in the royal navy, but afterwards he entered Sandhurst, from whence he obtained a commission in the 92nd Highlanders. He was a fine, handsome, powerfully-built young fellow, and a very general favourite in Auckland, and he and I had rooms together while I resided in that city.

The news of this melancholy incident cast a gloom over me for some time after.

I omitted to mention, that during the difficulties I had passed through, while endeavouring to obtain a situation, I had not overlooked the existence of a letter of introduction I had with me from a friend in England, to a merchant in Sydney, and naturally I lost no time in presenting it. I found the gentleman in his counting-house. He was most affable and friendly in his manner towards me, and took me for a walk, pointing out all the objects of interest. But when I mentioned it was absolutely necessary that I should find some employment at once, his manner changed, and he assured me that he had nothing for me himself, nor could he suggest anything whatsoever which would guide and assist me in procuring occupation. My heart was beginning to fail me as he gave me this assurance, nor did he again repeat an invitation he had hinted was in store, to dine with him at his country house in Paramatta, and when we parted it appeared to me that his leave was taken with a kind of a "grunt," but, upon reflection, I remembered that I could expect no better from the description of animal I found him to be.

I never called on that individual again, and merely record the incident to add my testimony to those who have found the value of letters of introduction to be similar to mine. If the bearer of a letter of introduction is either rich or a very great man, there is no doubt he will meet with the greatest kindness and attention on all sides. But once let it be known that he is neither the one nor the other, and no notice whatever will be taken of him, no attention will be shown him, and he will be looked upon with suspicion, and instead of letters of introduction being of any value, they will merely buoy up false hopes.

But I am straying too far from my bar, and this will never do. Despite my moralising, as I said before, I found the duties of my situation to be telling on my constitution. I had never been accustomed to a life of confinement, and now I hardly ever had an opportunity of getting a little fresh air, except occasionally for a very short time on Sundays. I was obliged to be ready in my bar at five A.M., in order to serve a whole host of fish hawkers, coal porters, and costermongers with their morning dram, which consisted, in the cold weather, of hot rum and milk, and in the summer of cold ditto; upon this mixture an innumerable quantity of such people as I have described commenced their day. Most of them appeared to me as if they had not very long before partaken of the last glass of the preceding evening, and many of them, on account of the consequent unsettled state of their interiors, had some difficulty in overcoming the nauseousness of their first "nobbler;" and often two or three attempts would be made before the first could be induced to remain down. But this great preliminary difficulty being finally overcome, to use their own words—"There was no further trouble for the remainder of the day."

There is no doubt that an immense amount of intoxicat-

ing liquor is daily consumed in Sydney, and the Freemason's Tavern came in for more than an average share of this patronage. I very seldom got to my bed before two A.M. Not that ostensibly our doors were not closed at 12.30 (an extra half-hour being allowed this house on account of the theatres), but the smoking-room and billiard-room were always full when closing time arrived, and these parties were allowed to remain and call for anything they liked, notwithstanding the landlord was the chief magistrate of the city, as long as they had any money wherewith to pay; and it was most wearying and distressing to me, tired as I was with my fair day's work, to remain in attendance upon a lot of dissipated rowdies, for there is no greater rowdie than the "corn stalk," or native born of New South Wales, more especially those found frequenting the hotels and taverns of Sydney.

Saturday evening was the busiest of the week. Whole families, fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters of all ages, were in the habit "of having an evening out in company." They were always handed into the coffee-room, where every imaginable concoction, to suit the taste of each member of the family, would be called for by the head of the house. Pretty young girls of tender years would be forced to drink brandy-and-water, their mothers often jeering at them when their choice seemed to suggest ginger-beer or lemonade, and would remind their daughters that when, if not before, they had arrived at their age, they could drink their "skin full" of "brandy neat." In this way education was attended to by parents. What wonder then, I ask, is it that this offspring of convict drunkards produced the race of rowdies I have described?

Of course it will be understood that I am describing, and merely allude to, the low life in Sydney. I believe there are no more respectable and industrious people to be found in any of the Australian colonies than are to be

met with in New South Wales. Besides, they are a fine, tall, manly race, and I have met some of the prettiest girls I have ever seen in my life in Sydney itself. They have lovely complexions, and, as a rule, beautiful white teeth, small well-shaped hands and feet, and exquisite figures, and it is a lasting pity that the tendency of the climate is to ripen too soon, and bring into full bloom, as it were from a stove-house, these beautiful "bouquets" of nature.

It will be asked what assistance the barmaid, Mary, was to me, and in reply I can merely say that she was of very little actual assistance at all. She certainly took charge of the bar while I indulged in my meals, but her business was to look pretty, and make herself agreeable to a certain class of young gentlemen, who whiled away their weary hours by paying her compliments; not that she cared much for any of them, but it was her business to be civil and look pleased, and these young fellows, clerks in banks and merchants' houses, spent a good deal of their surplus earnings upon brandy and billiards, and this brought profit to the house. Besides, they did not always go in for common drinks, and on pay days and grand occasions they indulged in brandies and sodas, and an exquisite description of cigar, which was kept especially for them, and for which they were made to pay an almost prohibitory price, in order to impress them with their value.

About half a dozen of these young gentlemen were under the impression that Mary was rather "spoony" upon them individually, and that she merely put up with the others as a matter of business. These favoured individuals would laugh when they saw their rivals occupying for the moment the post of honour, with elbows well planted upon the bar counter, and would merely wink at Mary and await their opportunity, pitying from the bottom of their

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hearts the simplicity of poor "Snooks," who was so very green as not to see that the girl did not care a straw for him, her real affections being entirely with themselves.

Mary was well supplied with gloves, neckties, and compliments by these youths, besides the beautiful baskets of fruit and bouquets of flowers, of which she was daily the recipient. Of course she received any amount of invitations to be accompanied on her Sunday walks by her beaux. But she was not only a pretty girl, but a very sensible girl too, and she well knew that none of these young fellows were in her station of life, nor did she think they were suitable from a matrimonial point of view, as she was not ambitious for genteel poverty; so she always made excuses of one kind or another, and thus, by avoiding giving offence to others, still kept customers to the house.

I think, had I been a real barman instead of a sham one, I should have had a very good chance of success had I gone in for Mary, as we might have easily built an "hotel in the air," with Mary and myself as landlord and landlady, which would have sufficiently flattered our ambition to have induced us to join in partnership. But I knew too well what was good for myself, and good for her at the same time, and these dreams did not disturb me.

Having been now in this employment four months I had saved some money, and determined to try my luck at something else, come what would, as the confinement of the house had now become intolerable to me. I therefore gave one week's notice according to the terms of my agreement.

At the end of that week I received all wages due, and said "good-bye" to the Freemason's Hotel.

CHAPTER VIII.

At the mercy of the world—The Demesne—Botanical and Zoological Gardens—Lady McQuarie's chair—A country situation offered—Poorer but wiser—Botany Bay—Hard times—The public fountain—A damp bed—Making my toilet—The *Morning Herald*—My firewood friends—An opportunity—A light breakfast—Missing mails—My task completed—Providence—My interview with Captain McNab.

I WAS now at the mercy of the world once more. I hired a bedroom in a district of Sydney called Woolamaloo, and, during the first week or two, I thought of nothing but fresh air, as I was feeling far from either strong or well. The beautiful park of Sydney, known as the "Demesne," extending as it did to the shores of the bay, had many attractions for me. One of the prettiest and most interesting portions of the Demesne was devoted to a botanical garden, and another to zoology. Both of these subjects have always been interesting to me, and during my travels I have collected large numbers of specimens, skins, seeds, and plants. I passed my days pleasantly enough in this way, and in a very short time was well known to the gardeners and keepers as one who took considerable interest in, and was possessed of some knowledge of, the objects of their care. There was a most delightful view of the bay. Here, seated in a chair cleaved out of the solid granite, I passed many a pleasant hour, admiring the scarcely to be surpassed view which met my gaze, looking straight on to Port Jackson, which is con-

sidered by many travellers to be one of the finest harbours in the world, but with regard to which I shall have more to say in a succeeding chapter, and I am sure if Lady McQuarie, after whom the celebrated chair has been called, enjoyed the lovely landscape which was presented to her as much as I did, the work of the labourer who made the cutting was not thrown away; nor could she fail to have enjoyed some, at least, of the many days she passed as the wife of one of the most respected governors the colony ever possessed.

I now thought it time, as my means were getting very much diminished, to look for something to do. My inclination led me to wish for employment on a sheep or cattle station, but I was told I should not find it at all easy to indulge this taste, but that my best plan would be to call upon a labour-agent, and ask him to procure a situation in the country for me. This I did, and having paid the deposit of 7s. 6d., in the course of a few days a situation was offered, but unfortunately we could not come to terms. I was to be a general servant upon a large farm up country, and my duties were to consist of, first, taking care of the children, and teaching them "something;" secondly, I was to pull the boat down the river, a distance of about four miles, to fetch the letters and anything that might be required for the house, and, upon my return, was to assist in the garden or stable, or to mind a flock of sheep, if required. My wages were to be ten shillings a week all found. I was to be a strict teetotaller, easily pleased, good tempered, moral, and religious, as an example for the children.

There were a great many other little qualifications, which the agent said it would be as well to be prepared with, in case of emergency; and he also assured me that, if I did not feel quite confident of my ability to perform

the duties of my office, it would be very much better to save myself the trouble of making the journey, as the master was a strict Methodist, and the mistress was very hard to please indeed; in fact, all those whom he had sent to fill the position had returned saying, that "although the master was a very hard man, the mistress was the d—l."

Under these circumstances, I fancy I did wisely in not accepting the proffered situation. I asked the agent for my 7s. 6d., as he told me there was no other vacancy at present; but what was my surprise, when he coolly informed me that my deposit was now forfeited, as he had procured me a situation if I chose to accept it.

I could not help feeling that I had been hardly treated in this, and I did my best to induce him either to return me my money or to try and get me another chance, and was at the same time almost regretting that I had not accepted the place, bad as it appeared to be, for I knew I could not hold out for many days unless something turned up. But it was no use; his heart, accustomed to such appeals, was proof against my eloquence and persuasion, and I was obliged to turn my back upon the labour-office, as I believe many had done before me, a poorer but a wiser man.

Next day I devoted entirely to contemplation, and trying to form in my mind some great plans of operation. I thought of starting upon a walking trip up country, and calling at all the places on the road in search of work. So, putting a few things together, and telling my landlady, in the event of my not returning, not to be alarmed, for that I would write, I started. I did not care where I went, it was all the same to me. After walking for some hours, I found myself, upon inquiry, to have reached a place I had often heard of in my juvenile days, "Botany Bay." Here I halted to rest myself, and entered a small

inn where I got into conversation with some men who were refreshing themselves with colonial beer, and they soon elicited from me that I was "on the march," as they called it, and they drew such a dreadful picture of what I had to expect, and the sheer impossibility of my obtaining anything to do, that I felt quite despondent. "Ah," they said, "the time is passed for that kind of thing in New South Wales, and it is now very hard to get a job. Look at the number of men who, because they cannot earn an honest living, have been obliged to take to the roads, and turn bushrangers. Go back," they said, "and if you can't get a job in the city, try and work your passage to the old country."

I was much impressed by the manner of these hardy fellows, and was disposed to take their advice, but it went against my grain very much to turn back after having once set out. However, the magic words "Return to the old country" decided me, and having thanked them for their advice, I retraced my steps. I was very glad on finding myself at my lodgings once more. I soon fell sound asleep, and, next day, as usual, looked through the advertisements in the *Morning Herald*, to see if there was anything likely to suit me. I was now getting very hard up indeed, and was obliged to tell my landlady. She, poor woman, was very sorry, but she was poor herself and dependent upon letting her rooms for her support. She very kindly, however, offered to keep anything for me, which I did not require for present use, and with a heavy heart, and capital of fourpence, I wished her good-morning, not knowing where I should go to or where I should sleep. When night approached, I wandered through the streets for some time, and then turned towards the park. There I strolled about for some hours; a band was playing in the Botanical Gardens, and many of the élite of Sydney were enjoying themselves, listening

to the strains of music. I saw the merchant there with his wife and daughter, as I supposed. He looked at me, but either did not, or would not, recognise me, and I was too proud to speak; sooner far would I have suffered starvation. And still I had ascertained that this was a rich man, who had amassed, commencing as a poor boy of obscure origin, a large fortune. He was now proud enough, and I was told he was the greatest "tuft hunter" in Sydney. When the last piece on the programme was concluded, I had the gratification of seeing all the gay throng set off towards their different homes, many I had no doubt to enjoy a good dinner, with appetites sharpened by the cooling breeze which had been wafted from the sea, and I too was getting hungry and felt that dinner-hour had arrived; but where was I to dine? I knew no place where the commonest dinner could be obtained for fourpence. I might have gone to my late hotel and ordered a glass of ale and a sea-biscuit for this sum, but I did not like to let Mary know I was hard up; and besides I thought I could make my money go farther, and I was determined not to spend my entire capital upon one meal, else what should I do for my breakfast? for which I was likely to have a sharp appetite, as it was my intention to sleep upon the ground under a tree. I therefore went to the nearest baker's, and bought two pennyworth of bread, and having secured this and my change, I retraced my steps to the Demesne. There I took my seat upon the steps of a public fountain, which some good citizen had erected in his own honour to adorn the park and add lustre to his name.

My scanty meal was soon finished, and I now wandered about, until I felt so thoroughly tired out that I selected a secluded spot, and laying down my head, soon fell fast asleep. Next morning, just at dawn of day, I got up feeling horribly cold, and, as ill-luck would have it, a

mizzling rain had commenced to fall. I took a path leading to the sea, where I intended making my toilette. The sea looked so tempting that I thought the best way to wash would be by getting bodily in—so, in I went, regardless entirely as to how I should dry myself. When I came out I was obliged to run about until I got dry. Meanwhile the sun had appeared, the mist had cleared off, and everything betokened a lovely morning; I soon finished my toilet, and paid my accustomed visit to the office of the *Morning Herald.*

While on my way, my attention was attracted by some carts heavily laden with firewood—large, heavy, unwieldly logs, the owners of which were no other than the very men I met at Botany Bay, and who advised me to retrace my steps to Sydney. We mutually recognised each other, and said good morning. They told me they were about to offer their wood for sale; I asked them whether it would not be necessary to cut the logs, in order that they might be made more handy for ordinary fireplaces. "Yes," they replied, "but that is no part of our business; we merely deliver and sell in the rough, as you see it, direct from the bush."

Here, then, was an opportunity for me. I could handle an axe well, having had any amount of experience during my sojourn in the Waikato, and I at once saw that my plan was to accompany these men until somebody purchased their loads, and then upon their recommendation to offer my services to cut and split the wood into serviceable lengths and dimensions. The men readily agreed, and were even good enough to volunteer lending me a heavy axe for the purpose. They said they had plenty in the bush, and I could return it to them another time when they came to dispose of more firewood.

They were not long in finding a purchaser, as they had a number of customers they were in the habit of supply-

ing, and had always treated well. Each cart held about two tons of wood, and on this occasion one customer took both loads. A bargain was soon made between myself and the purchaser: I should receive 7s. 6d. per ton for cutting and stacking the lot. I went to work there and then, and before ten o'clock had succeeded in splitting some of the knottiest and most troublesome of my logs. I then felt that I could do justice to the balance of my capital, and putting on my coat, I paid another visit to the baker's. My breakfast was not a very substantial one for a man who had slept all night in the open air had taken a dip in the salt-water, and had made an uncommonly small meal the evening before; and when I further reflected there was no chance of my getting anything at mid-day unless I asked for an advance, which I did not wish to do, I thought I should indeed be done up by the time I earned my first 7s. 6d. However, I worked on hard all day, and being a willing workman found that by five P.M. I had actually cut up what my employer had pointed out to me in the morning as representing a fair average ton. I was very pleased with my performance, and so was the owner of the firewood who now handed me my day's pay, and wishing me good-night, desired me to return in good time next morning.

I called upon my landlady to tell her the good news but she had let my room the day I left. I consequently determined for the present merely to take a bed somewhere from night to night, until I knew what was going to become of me. I had written home to explain my position to my father and mother, knowing that they would at once send me a remittance. My letters seemed to have all gone astray, and those to whom I had written regarding them, to Auckland, had taken no trouble in the matter. I had not received any news from home for some time, and my allowance either was not forthcoming

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or else had gone astray. I subsequently, on my return to England, ascertained that money was held in the Bank of New Zealand for me for some time, just about this period, and that it was eventually returned to the sender, my father, as I could nowhere be found, So there can be no doubt those whom I applied to for my letters never took any trouble to send them, and they were ultimately returned through the post-office.

At the end of three days my task was completed, and I kept a look out for another employment. Meanwhile I was very provident with the small amount of my earnings which remained, as I had learned to regard money in a very economical way, and had found out that although it may be questioned whether gold after all brings many real pleasures with it, there is no doubt it removes a great deal of misery. I thought of the advice my firewood friends had given me, viz., to return to the old country in case I could get nothing to do in Sydney, and as there were any number of fine large sailing vessels then in harbour, I thought it would not be a bad plan to see some of the commanders and ask them to allow me to work a passage home. I heard of one Scotch captain who was actually looking out for somebody like myself to attend him as steward on his homeward voyage, and his ship was the first on the berth, and had nearly taken in the minimum quantity of wool which would comprise her cargo; so I determined to speak with him. Accordingly, I wandered down to the shipping and soon found the vessel I was looking for. She was close in dock, and was connected with the shore by a very narrow shaky plank, across which I strode, and, upon reaching the deck, demanded to see the captain. "I am Captain McNab," replied the dirty-looking individual I addressed, "and I command this ship and all that's aboord of her, and I would like to hear any man dispute it." I assured him I

had not the least intention of disputing the fact with him, and was about to tell him my business when he interrupted me by demanding, in the most demoralised Scotch, "Then what do you want with me, mon?" It was now my turn to tell him that I had heard he required a man to act as steward. "Steward and carpenter!" he roared; "steward and carpenter!" I told him I was only a very rough kind of a carpenter, my only experience having been gained in building a shed in the bush for my horse "That's gude enough for me," he replied; "you'll do there's your cuddy," said he, at the same time pointing out to me a very wretched-looking deck cabin. "Go in and see if you fit in it, and then we will soon settle our terms." Without knowing why I did so, for I had made up my mind never to sail under Captain McNab, I found myself at the threshold of the cuddy. Curiosity now prompted me to enter, but no sooner had I done so than there followed a regular downpour of cups and jugs, which had been suspended from the roof of the cuddy upon hooks, and coming in contact with my head, were displaced and dashed upon the decks. Here was a nice mess. The captain came rushing up like a raving lunatic, cursing and swearing at the highest pitch of his voice; I took good care, however, to keep out of his way. By this time the whole ship's company had collected. I tried to make my escape as quickly as I could, the infuriated Captain McNab calling upon me all the time to leave the ship, at another moment calling upon his men to heave me overboard, and other reassuring suggestions too numerous to mention here, even were they fit for publication.

I need not say that this incident deterred me for the present from any immediate intention of renewing my efforts towards "working a passage home."

CHAPTER IX.

Sunshine *v.* Clouds—The daily paper—"Wanted, an Engineer"—Examining the premises—The governor—"Old hands"—"A new chum, no doubt"—Engaged—My assistant—Engine-house—Ha! ha! ha!—Easier said than done—"The Blue Bell round the corner"—A promise kept—Getting up steam—"New brooms"—A painstaking, industrious, respectable, intelligent, and remarkably civil young man—Oil and soot—Making white pepper—Genuine *v.* Adulterated coffee—A lively correspondence—The result—The secrets of trade.

THE incident which I have described at the close of the last chapter had rather an upsetting influence, as it made me appear awkward and to disadvantage before a whole ship's crew. Some people do not mind this, but I have always been rather sensitive with respect to other people's opinions as to the esteem, or otherwise, with which I am regarded by my fellow beings. I alway think one gets through the world much more pleasantly while the sun shines, and when the smiles and not the frowns of those we are obliged to mix with are vouchsafed us. For instance, the railway porter. Do we not feel more satisfied with the world in general after tipping him sixpence for seeing after our luggage, while we have had leisure to look about us, chat to some friend, who has come to see us off, or to welcome our arrival? We do not miss the little sixpence; we receive the smiles and good wishes of the poor porter, who has only shared part of the plenty, which he has every reason to believe, from the weight of the portmanteau and the comfortable appearance of the warm

rug and travelling coats, must be the inheritance of the traveller he has been attentive to. I say, therefore, I did not feel quite as comfortable or satisfied as I should have felt had I not been brought into contact with Captain McNab.

Next morning, as usual, I rose at daybreak, and, as had now become my habit, found myself in front of the *Morning Herald* office. The daily paper, I may as well record, was posted on a board in front of the door, for the general information of applicants for employment and other unfortunates who have not the means of becoming themselves the proprietors of a copy, and amongst this class, I regret to say, I might now too often be numbered.

My eye, long accustomed to scanning the "Wants," soon rested upon something I thought would suit; it ran thus—

"Wanted, an engineer to take charge of a coffee-mill; apply, this morning, between 8 and 10 A.M."

Here was just the thing to suit me; but then I was not an engineer, nor did I know anything about coffee-mills. Never mind, I argued, I should soon learn all, if I could only manage to get the place. I would get my breakfast at once, then examine the premises, and try and form some idea of what would be required, and make my application.

This programme I put into execution at once. I hurried over my breakfast, for I was very anxious, and had somehow taken a great fancy to the kind of work which I anticipated lay before me should I be successful. I easily found the premises. I had often passed them by, and heard a steam-engine at work, but otherwise there was nothing stirring or remarkable about them. I did not see very many other applicants about, as skilled labour was always in demand, and at no time were there many mechanics out of employment. I walked boldly in and demanded to see the proprietor, or governor, as he is

more often spoken of in Australia. The governor, who was in his office, was a little old gentleman with very grey hair and a red face. He was the very picture of neatness and tidiness; in fact, he looked as if he had just issued from a bath and a bandbox at the same time. "Good morning," said he. "Good morning, sir," said I. "I suppose you have come to see me in reply to an advertisement in this morning's paper," he resumed. "Have you had much experience in this country as an engineer?" "No," I replied, "I have not had much experience in this country; in fact I have not been very long in Sydney." "I am glad of that; I am glad of that," he instantly replied, cutting me short as regards anything I might incautiously have been about to add. "You see," he said, "these old hands are not to be depended upon. I have had a deal of trouble with them. They take offence at the least thing one may say, and as for expecting them to put in a few hours extra to finish a job, it's out of the question altogether. Yes—I boldly assert, and I have now been in New South Wales forty-five years—I boldly assert it is out of the question." And here the old gentleman's face was gradually assuming a colour which may be seen by watching the change of countenance assumed by a Turkey cock, together with an expression of great severity.

I was about to speak, as I now thought it incumbent upon me, but had no sooner opened my lips than I was interrupted by the old gentleman, who almost roared, "Don't utter another word in their favour; I have done with them for ever. You are a new chum, no doubt, and have much to learn," he continued, "but I can see at once you understand your business, in all its branches. Yes, I repeat"—seeing that I appeared to be rather incredulous—"in all its branches. You also appear to be a most painstaking, industrious, respectable, intelligent, and

remarkably civil young man.* The appointment is at your service; wages £2 per week and all found. You will partake of your meals at the same board as myself and good lady; upon which occasions, I need hardly remind you, we will expect you to have removed all oil and soot from your person before sitting down to table. Your bedroom will be close to the engine, so that you can at all times be within easy access of it. Our business is to roast and grind coffee, pepper, and rice; to saw timber and to card cocoa-nut fibre. There," said he, pointing to the engine-house, "you will find one of the finest eight horse-power engines in Australia. Yes, I repeat it, in Australia! But, as I have lately been tormented by so many would-be engineers, who have engaged as masters of their craft, I warn you that you will not find things in very good working order; and if you will be advised by me, who have spent forty-five years in New South Wales, I would strongly recommend you before you go to bed this night, for the morrow's work must not be interfered with, to take the entire engine and all its appurtenances to pieces, bit by bit, and give it a thorough cleaning and overhauling. Come whenever you like in the course of the day, we are quite ready to receive you."

As soon as the old gentleman had left me to my reflections, which he now did, I thought I had never met a more extraordinary being in my life. I felt sure, however, that he was merely eccentric, and that I should get on with him very well when we came to know each other better, and if I did not at once blow up the whole premises. I now proceeded leisurely to examine the place, commencing with the engine-house. Here I encountered a dissipated looking individual, who addressed me thus: "So the old buffer has engaged you, has he? I am afraid

* It will be observed that I was never asked to produce testimonials, this custom not being prevalent when I was in New South Wales.

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he will find you little better than the rest. What do you know about engines and such like? Sure, I knew the minute ever I saw you coming into the yard that you were no engineer. And are you going to take the engine to pieces? Ha! ha! ha! faith, then, I am afeered it will be a long time before you put it together again, if you do!" These were the remarks that proceeded from the dissipated looking individual, with a gentle, easy flow. I felt indignant with him at first, and thought of desiring him to mind his own business, but I recollected that there was too much truth in what he stated—"I might find it easier to take it to pieces than to put it together again." So I checked the rebuff I was about to give, and merely asked him who he was. "Who am I?" said he, repeating my question. "I am Thomas Jones, late of Newport, Monmouthshire, but at present of Sydney, New South Wales, second engineer to Theophilus Nesbit, Esquire, coffee-grinder of this city. I ought to be engineer-in-chief to this establishment, but I never gets my rights, nor never expects to; so I'll tell you what I'll do. You see it would come quite easy for me to take everything to pieces, and put it together again after cleaning it, and then you could get the credit; and if you promise in return to take me to the Blue Bell round the corner, and give me my skin full of whatever I choose to call for, I'll take off my coat this minute and commence; and you can lend me a hand for appearance sake." After a little reflection I agreed to his terms. I did not like to do anything dishonest, which was the sole reason of my hesitation; but when I recollected that I really and truly did not know anything about the business, and that I was to a great extent at the mercy of this man, and would by assisting him learn a great deal from this first lesson, our bargain was concluded, and we were soon hard at work. Before eight o'clock that evening we had not only taken

every part of the engine to pieces, but we had refitted and replaced every bolt and nut. I kept my promise that evening. I did not, however, think it necessary to remain and watch my companion making a beast of himself, so I made arrangements with the landlord to supply as much as he considered would be good for him, which he undertook to do. I then turned towards home and to bed, heartily congratulating myself on my good fortune.

Next morning, on rising, I got the fires up so as to have steam for commencing work by breakfast time. When I met the old gentleman at the morning meal he introduced me to his wife, saying, "This is Mr. B——, our new engineer. I feel, my dear, that we have at last secured a real comfort." The good lady, who looked in every way part and parcel of her husband, replied gracefully and pleasantly, that she sincerely hoped and thought so. An excellent and most homely breakfast was put on the table. After doing it ample justice, the old gentleman proposed visiting and examining the work which had been effected by the "new broom." I had been very careful not to say anything about it while at breakfast. The sight that met the old gentleman's view when he stood before the nice, bright, clean-looking engine was too much for the kind old man. "I told you," said he, "you knew all about it, and that you were a painstaking, industrious, respectable, intelligent, and remarkably civil young man; and I now repeat it. Yes, I say it emphatically!" And here he ran off to unfold the joyful news to his wife. "You are a most painstaking, industrious, respectable, intelligent, and remarkably civil young man." The last words were almost inaudible, as he had by this time reached the breakfast-room. I presume he entered into full particulars with his better-half, and that they mutually congratulated themselves upon their good fortune in securing so valuable an engineer, but he did not again

make his appearance. Meanwhile I proceeded to grind a large quantity of coffee which had accumulated; and by the time my first day's work was performed I was quite up to all I was expected to do.

When my day's work was over I retired to my room to divest myself of all the oil and soot with which I had been plentifully besmeared during the day. I first washed as much off as possible with hot water and soap, finishing up with a douche under the shower-bath to refresh me. I was then ready for my supper, which was served at half-past six o'clock, after which I passed my evening in any way my fancy suggested.

Roasting and grinding coffee was pleasant work enough, and, indeed, so was "sawing" and "carding;" but pepper grinding was far from pleasant. On these occasions the fine dust would escape all over the workshop, and fill the eyes and nose in every crevice, causing moist eyes and violent fits of sneezing. It astonished me to learn how little of the genuine article was used in the manufacture of what is sold as white pepper, the principal ingredient of which is either ground rice or Indian corn, the former being used in the manufacture of the first class, and the latter in that of the second class article.

The mode of procedure was as follows, a quantity of ground rice and pepper, in proportions of about one of pepper to four of rice, is mixed and then returned to the mill to be reground together. Sometimes the proportion of pepper or corn is very much less than this. One would have thought it would be better to leave the pepper alone, and use less of it when seasoning dishes; but I presume the experience of the trade deems it otherwise. There are secrets, they say, in every trade.

In the same manner coffee is treated. A quantity of ground coffee and chicory is mixed together, and then replaced in the mill for another turn.

I remember on one occasion we had run rather short of chicory, and had a large order on hand for a private family who used a great deal of coffee, and who were very particular about the quality of it. It had been promised on a certain day, but when the time arrived for delivery the chicory we ordered had not made its appearance. What was to be done? I consulted the old gentleman, who said, "Never mind, send them the real pure article this time. They are good customers, and we will do without our profit." So I returned to the mill, made up the parcels, and sent them forward for delivery.

A few days afterwards the old gentleman called me into his office, and produced a letter, which he had that morning received from his customers of the pure coffee, complaining bitterly of the quality of the last which they had received. His letter ran thus :—

"MR. T. NESBIT,

SIR,—I have been much surprised and annoyed for the last day or two by the many complaints that have reached me, not alone from my own family, but from my servants, with respect to the very poor quality of the last coffee with which I have been supplied by you.

"My wife, who is an excellent judge of coffee, and cannot be deceived, declares that she has detected the bitter taste of chicory in the mixture you have sent. Should such turn out to be a fact, and I have no right to suspect the testimony of my wife, I must say I consider you have practised upon me a deceit, of which I should have been sorry to accuse you.

"I trust you will have the goodness to look into the matter at once. *I have heard of grooms selling oats intended for the horses.* May it not be possible that your foreman has discovered a profitable trade, in disposing of

the pure coffee and substituting the cheaper article chicory, so often used to adulterate this article?

"Should you be unable to explain the matter to my satisfaction, I shall, much as I regret the step, be obliged to withdraw my future custom from you.

"Yours very obediently,

(Signed) "JAMES N. PARLEY.

"P.S. My wife has just entered, as I am closing this letter, to look over my correspondence, and desires me to add, that *she is quite sure about the chicory*, but suggests that the coffee contains several other compounds or mixtures. Besides, she complains of feeling very ill, and hopes there cannot have been added anything poisonous.

"J. N. P."

Here was a nice epistle. I assured the "governor" I had merely, according to his orders, sent the genuine coffee just as it had left the mill. We sent for the article of suspicion, which, on its being produced, we carefully examined, in case it had in any way been tampered with. But no, there was the pure, unadulterated material, just as it had left the mill. Meanwhile, the chicory had arrived; so, after a little consultation, we agreed that the best thing to be done was to mix the coffee with it in the usual way, and then return it with an excuse.

This was done; and in the course of that very afternoon once more the order was sent forward accompanied by a note, which the governor had concocted for the purpose, in reply to the letter which he had received. It ran thus:—

"To JAMES N. PARLEY, ESQ.,

SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, and regret very much that a mistake should have occurred.

"The coffee which was addressed to you was intended

for another customer, *a native of the Channel Islands*, and, by his express orders, it was largely mixed with chicory, an article commonly used in his country for this purpose.

"I should indeed be sorry to lose so old and good a customer as you, Sir. I must, however, mention that I entirely exculpate my foreman from all blame in the matter, as he merely attended to his orders. And your good lady, whom I trust is better, need have no fear that any poisonous matter could have been introduced into the coffee.

"My foreman is incapable of doing such a thing; and, I repeat it, he is an industrious, painstaking, respectable, and very civil young man.

"I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
(Signed) "THEOPHILUS NESBIT."

In the course of a few days an acknowledgment of the goods was received. The language of the letter was most courteous, and as this finished the correspondence, and as it will explain far more of the subject than I can otherwise depict, I shall endeavour to give the original as nearly as my memory serves.

"MR. T. NESBIT,

DEAR SIR,—I have duly received the coffee which you have been good enough to send in lieu of the 'horrible mixture' which was intended for the gentleman from the Channel Islands.

"The article which I have now received is quite equal to the best samples I have ever got from you, and so long as you continue to send me such first-class goods you may count upon my custom.

"Mrs. Parley desires me say, that she never tasted better coffee in her life, and she feels sure it does not this time contain any admixture of chicory, an article for which

she entertains the greatest dislike; and she desires me to say, that *it is impossible to deceive her!*

"Yours obediently,

(Signed) "JAMES N. PARLEY."

Thus ended this transaction. It made a great impression upon me at the time, but my employer told me, that as long as a judicious course of adulteration was pursued there was no danger of displeasing customers, but it was a most dangerous thing to depart from this rule. There could not have been a finer example of the truth of this statement than that which had just occurred. Here were an entire family almost ready to swear that a genuine article was adulterated, and that an adulterated article was wholly and completely pure. I suppose this must be the case in every-day life. We little know very often when praising a particular tea, coffee, or wine, that the real secret of its goodness consists in its badness, *i.e.* its adulteration; whereas a really genuine article is often condemned. But, never mind, it was my duty to mix and adulterate, so I troubled myself very little more upon the subject.

CHAPTER X.

The remarkably civil young man again—The mail-steamer—The Post Office—The registered letter—Friends and relations—The Conservatives in power—A useful recognition—A roll of notes—Breakfast—Late at work—I determine to visit Melbourne—Congratulations—The advertisement renewed—Saying farewell—Perry's hotel—K.—Dissolving partnership—Billiard matches—Visiting places of interest—The rival companies—The Leichart search expedition.

WEEK after week quickly passed away without anything worthy of note. Each day brought with it its own portion of work; the "finest engine in Australia" was kept busily engaged, and under the able management of such a "painstaking, industrious, respectable, and remarkably civil young man," of course the machinery did not get out of order or require to be cleaned for some time longer, and the business seemed to increase.

I have already mentioned that I had written home explaining the position I found myself in, and the time had now arrived for an answer. I had calculated the exact mail which would bring me the wished-for letter, the exact day upon which it would be delivered in Sydney, and as a matter of course this particular day duly arrived. I had been working very hard on the morning of the day I expected my letters, and had retired to my room to divest myself of my greasy garments before going to breakfast, when from my bedroom window, which overlooked the bay, I recognised the P. and O. steamer, carry-

ing the mails, steaming proudly into the harbour; I knew it would take at least two hours before the letters could be got on shore and delivered, and as I was excited and impatient to hear how all my old friends and relatives at home were, I ran down stairs, looked into the old gentleman's office, asked him to excuse my not appearing at breakfast as I had some business in the town, and would partake of that meal with a friend there.

He readily excused me, as I promised to return in good time. I then made my way towards the landing stage. When I arrived I had the satisfaction of seeing the steamer at anchor, and the mails being placed in the boat, previous to be taken on shore. I watched the boat as it was pulled vigorously to shore, and saw the bags being transferred from it to the mail cart.

As an agent for the purpose accompanies each steamer, the letters are all sorted before they reach the post-office. Those which are not intended for delivery, but are to be called for, are arranged in alphabetical order, and half-a-dozen windows marked from A, D, H, &c., are set off where inquiries are to be directed by those who expect letters, and whose initials correspond with these departments. These windows are kept strictly closed until the time arrives for delivery. Great crowds collect round and it is necessary to secure a good place pretty early, or else to wait until the great pressure is over. I was in good time however, on this particular morning, in fact I was the very first on the scene. I felt very excited. I thought a hundred times, what if there is no letter for me after all! and even if there should be it may not contain the much coveted remittance.

I was not long kept in suspense now; the window was opened at last. The crowd began to press eagerly forward, but I had secured the post of honour. "Any letters or papers for H. L. B.?" I demanded. The clerk

looked over a number of letters in his hand, and replied "Yes, a registered letter," handing it to me. "Please sign the register." This being done, I did not wait to hear whether there were any papers for me, I was too anxious to read the news from home. When I got free from the crowd and opened the letter, the first thing that attracted my attention was an enclosure, the well-known form of which I recognised as a letter of credit. It was for a considerable amount more than I had had in my pocket for a long time, and it made me feel uncommonly comfortable. The news contained in my letter was very pleasant indeed; all my friends and relations were flourishing, and an assurance of welcome was promised me at any time I chose to return home, where my poor mother assured me I would get a good government appointment, now that I had grown so steady in Australia, and the Conservatives were in power.

When I presented my draft at the bank, the manager told me I must get somebody to recognise me as the individual thereupon represented. I had not calculated upon this, and was turning to leave the bank when my eye caught sight of one of Mary's lovers. I beckoned to him, and upon his approach asked him if he recognised me. "Oh yes," he replied. I then asked him to tell the manager; this he did at once, and a roll of notes was handed to me.

I then proceeded to the hotel in George Street, where I ordered the best breakfast they could produce, and when I had finished returned to the coffee-mill.

I was considerably late in resuming my work, and the old gentleman was very angry. He asked me what had caused my delay? I told him I had received some letters from home, which I remained to read; that they contained an order for some money, and that my friends wished me to return to England.

The fact of the matter was, I had taken it into my head I would go to Melbourne in a few days.

The old gentleman was quite thunderstruck when I said this, and remarked that he was very sorry indeed to hear it; then correcting himself he explained, "Very sorry you know to hear you are going," but, smiling and looking very pleased, "very glad to hear of your good fortune. This," he resumed, "will cause me a great deal of inconvenience, as you must be aware; we have a large amount of work on hand, and it will be no easy matter to procure another competent foreman in your place within a week." I immediately replied that I could not think of leaving him in a dilemma after all his kindness, and would remain until the present accumulation of work was got through, and until he had secured the services of another qualified engineer.

He thanked me very much for my prompt response to his wishes, and I at once set to work with a determination that, by the end of my week, I should have at least performed my part to his satisfaction, in so far as clearing off all work on hand.

Next day, the same advertisement which had in the first instance attracted my attention, appeared once more in the *Morning Herald*. This time several applicants appeared in reply, one of whom was selected and engaged to take my place upon the morning of departure.

When I called upon the old gentleman and his wife to say good-bye, nothing could have been kinder than their farewell. He told me that, in the event of my ever again requiring similar employment, he would always make room for me. He also said I had served him with more satisfaction than any of my predecessors, and if I chose at any time to refer to him, he would always say, and say truly, that while in his employment he had always found me, a most "painstaking, industrious, intelligent, and remarkably

civil young man." They shook me warmly by wishing me all manner of good fortune, and quite low in spirit at leaving.

After saying farewell to the coffee-mill, I residence at Perry's Hotel for a few days, unti a steamer bound for Melbourne. Here I m mine from New Zealand, young K——, th the ill-fated *Elphin Queen* which I have wrecked on the passage to Hokitika.

K—— was on his way home, but inten Melbourne, so we agreed to proceed there

He had been in New Zealand about t which time he had lost all his mon England in the first instance in compan with whom he had formed a partnershi of sheep farming. They had purchas were doing very well indeed, but som "pull" well together and K—— left him to withdraw his share of capital. his residence in Auckland, where he ance of plenty of young fellows gl panions as long as his money la capital billiard player, and was there a certain lot. This was a most unf as he was always receiving challeng to play for high stakes. Sometim after which a return match would higher stake, and upon this oc flattered up to the skies with would thus be induced to give his adversary than his play war

In a short time, with such a its attendant dinners and sm who was one of the best and ever met, had parted with t

withdrawn from the sheep farm. Meanwhile the sheep farm flourished, and I believe those who stuck to it have done uncommonly well.

K—— was a very aristocratic and rather good-looking young fellow; but I do not think he possessed, at that time at least, any of the elements likely to make a successful colonist. He had also, poor fellow, to add to his difficulties, fallen "head over ears" in love with a young lady in Auckland, or more strictly speaking she had fallen in love with him, and as this flattered his vanity, a commodity he lacked not of, he capitulated and fell in love with her. He, however, found he could not marry for the present; but before he returned to England, which event was postponed for some time after his arrival in Melbourne, she joined him, and they were married and went home together.

K—— and I visited most of the places of interest in and around Sydney before we left. I introduced him to my late employer, who showed him over the premises. We thought at one time of paying a visit to Brisbane before leaving, but it happened that at that time a new steam packet company, had been started in opposition to theexisting one, which performed the service between Sydney and that port, and both companies, having from time to time reduced their fares in order to beat their adversary, were now advertising to carry passengers to Brisbane and back free of all charge, and it was anticipated that in a few days one of the rival companies would undertake to give a free passage including a "champagne dinner," which I have heard has several times been done in America, and this K—— and myself thought we might as well wait for. But it did not take place; an arrangement was entered into between the two companies, and business was resumed with the usual charges. We did not go to Brisbane, and in the course of a few days we took passage for Melbourne.

The journey to Melbourne occupied two and a days. We had a very pleasant passage, during w we made the acquaintance of Dr. M——, a gentl who had accompanied the last expedition in searc "Leichart," the great Australian explorer. Dr. M- interested us very much by the account he gave o travels and of all the sufferings the party went thr when their supply of water was exhausted, and how were left in the dry sandy deserts of the interior, the of their camels having died unexpectedly.

CHAPTER XI.

Melbourne *v.* Sydney—K.'s *fiancée*—Experience—Home idea of colonies—"All moonshine"—Bank-note sandwiches—Sheep stations—Chalker and Smikes—The banker's advice—The Scotch steward—A good opportunity of seeing the country—The mail phaeton—Italian opera and other attractions—Great friends—Promised employment—My new home—The hunting season—Inauguration meet—Our hunt breakfast—A splendid run—A flying doe—"Tears of pleasure"—"Whoo, whoop"—Household soup.

THE traveller who has visited Sydney, and expects to find the capital of Victoria somewhat similar, will be surprised, upon arrival at Melbourne, to discover that the two places are entirely unlike.

Sydney was a flourishing city before Melbourne was thought of, and has quite the appearance of an old-fashioned English town, while Melbourne has only recently sprung into existence. Its beautiful streets and parks were designed with all the knowledge of modern improvements, the streets being broad and planted with evergreen trees, while the city is constructed in square blocks, after the fashion of the new world. The inhabitants appear to be more energetic and busy than those of the sister city, and, in fact, it seemed to me that in every way the contrast between the capitals of Victoria and New South Wales was very striking.

K—— and myself took up our quarters together for the present. We happened during our stay to meet several friends from New Zealand, who told us the latest

news. This, of course, was far more interesting to my friend than to myself, and I fancy now, looking back upon the scene, that it is very likely he then received some letter or message from his *fiancée*, which decided his remaining in Melbourne longer than he intended doing at first, and which ultimately resulted in his being joined by the young lady and their subsequent marriage.

From what I could see of Melbourne, it appeared to be a far more go-ahead place than any I had been to yet, and I hoped sincerely that some opportunity would present itself by which I really could make a fair start in my "search for fortune" with some hope of success, for I felt that all my exertions hitherto had been fruitless and unprofitable. Although I could not help feeling that the experience which I had gained in Sydney would not fail to be of some value to me, I had at least learned that it was no easy matter to make one's way in the colonies, and that it was quite as difficult to get any pleasant or suitable employment in Australia or New Zealand as it was at home, if not more so. I had been accustomed, before leaving England, to look upon Australia as a country in which gold was to be picked up merely for the trouble of collecting it. I had constantly heard it remarked by all manner of people, when they happened to be talking of poor relations or others who had some difficulty in making both ends meet, "I wonder they do not go to Australia or somewhere, where everything is cheap and everybody grows rich at once, and return home in a few years." All this I had discovered to be moonshine, and that if such a period ever had existed in the history of the colonies, it was now a thing of the past.

I have no doubt that during those years when the first discoveries of gold were made large fortunes were realised by lucky diggers, and I have heard many stories related of these successes. I had heard of the entire crew of

the *Great Britain* steamship deserting at Melbourne, and making their way to Ballarat in 1852, and returning afterwards to England in the same vessel, within a very short period, with several thousand pounds each, as their share in the lucky venture; and I had also heard of the improvident digger who made sandwiches of bank notes while he lit his pipe with another. But specimens of these fortunate individuals I never met during my travels, though I visited any number of gold-fields all through the colonies, nor could I discover that large sheep or cattle stations were to be picked up every day in the most indiscriminate manner. I found that it required a very considerable amount of capital to commence cattle or sheep farming, and that the time had long since passed when large and valuable tracts of land could be obtained by application at the land office of the colony, for the annual payment of some merely nominal amount. Now it was not only a most expensive matter to start a sheep station, but it was very difficult indeed to get suitable pasture to purchase for the purpose, so great had become the demand.

A purchaser would have to be prepared to pay about £1 per head for sheep, including land; *i.e.* the value, for instance, of an average sheep run in the market, containing twenty thousand sheep, with sufficient pasture, out-houses, washing and dipping mills, &c., &c., would be estimated at £20,000, and this would only be considered a small station.

Now my means held out, under these circumstances, no chance of my being enabled to indulge in the luxury of a sheep station on my own responsibility, for I argued, even if I were possessed of such a sum of money, I should not remain in Australia. Before long, however, I was introduced to two young fellows who had left England expressly for the purpose of purchasing a station, and

settling down in Australia, They were possessed of the requisite amount of capital for the purpose. I had met some members of their family myself at home, and knew them to belong to a good old country family. They had only lately arrived, and had been advised by their banker, to whom they had brought letters of introduction, to take a little place outside Melbourne for a short time, until they had an opportunity of seeing something of the country, the climate, and the people, and of judging for themselves whether they would really like the mode of life they had selected, before irretrievably investing their capital.

This advice they acted upon, and at once set about procuring a house. The party consisted of two brothers, the elder of whom was nicknamed "Chalker" and the younger "Smikes." I cannot tell exactly what gave rise to their being called by these distinguished appellations, but I believe they originated on board ship on the outward passage.

They were accompanied by a Scotch steward, whom they had engaged for a number of years. A very pretty place was soon found about six miles from town, situated between the suburban watering-places of St. Kilda and Brighton. The house was a large one, fully furnished, and having an excellent flower and vegetable garden and an average amount of stabling and other offices.

Here they took up their residence, engaging gardeners, cook, and housemaid, and remained quietly for some time. But the monotony of this kind of life at length proving wearisome, horses were purchased and a groom engaged. With this addition to their establishment they were more content for a while, as it gave them an opportunity of seeing something of the surrounding country; but after a little they got tired of riding along the roads, and as they so often required to replenish their stores from town,

they made up their minds to go in for a mail phaeton and a pair of driving horses. These they accordingly purchased, and a very handsome carriage they selected. They also invested in a very fine pair of black horses, large, powerful, cobby animals, and, to complete the turn-out, they bought a set of untanned leather double harness, brass mounted. Of course it was now necessary to engage a second groom, as brass-mounted harness required special care, besides which they had four horses in the stable to be looked after.

It was at this period I happened to be introduced to them. They had begun to spend a great deal of their time in Melbourne, where an Italian opera company and several other attractions were to be met with. I was invited to dine at their country house; we became great friends. I understood from Chalker that capital was not very important with them in the choice of the station which they were about to purchase, as they could command plenty of money, and had come to the colonies more on account of Smikes's health than with a view of making money, and that when his brother was properly settled down he would return to England.

I was most anxious for employment on a station myself, and this now appeared to offer a good opportunity. I asked them whether, in the event of their purchasing a property, they would be able to find something for me to do, by which I could make a little money and learn something of the business. This they readily consented to do. It was arranged that I should remain with them until they were suited in a place, when I was to have charge of some portion of their run. Meanwhile I should be able to accompany them upon their journeys up country, when going to look at the various places which were to be had.

I now felt perfectly satisfied. I had at last succeeded

in getting at least a promise of employment upon a station, where I should have plenty of horses, good shooting, and all the sports and amusements of a life of which I had heard so much. Besides, I should be amongst friends and associating with gentlemen of my own position. I drew all sorts of castles in the air about being eventually the possessor of a large station myself, and in spite of the prognostication of the old Scotch gentleman, with whom I had had an interview at his club in London before leaving home, fancied I could picture myself a successful sheep farmer returning to England, before old age and gout had set in to the exclusion of everything enjoyable.

A few days afterwards I took up my abode amongst my new friends. I need hardly say they kept a capital house. They had procured the services of an excellent German cook. We lived very comfortably together; but I saw no anxiety, on the part of either of my friends, to go in search of what they had ostensibly come to Australia to secure. Winter and the hunting season were coming on, they said, and they thought perhaps it would be as well to wait until the following spring. They would then have had full opportunity of seeing the country and of conversing with different station holders, as advised by their banker. I was sorry to hear all this, as I was very anxious to get to work in earnest, and did not care about remaining in a limited country place of about two acres. However, there was the prospect of my being required at any time to go up country with them, when a station was to be looked at.

The hunting season had now commenced. There was an excellent pack of hounds, which hunted in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, kept by Mr. George Watson. This pack consisted of a number of very large-sized, well-bred dogs, selected from the best kennels in England, and they were regularly hunted by their master, Mr. Watson, who

was the proprietor of large stables and sale yards in Burke Street, Melbourne. He was a capital horseman, and as a sportsman from the old country he thoroughly understood how to hunt his pack. It was necessary to fix the meets some distance from town, as the game which was hunted, the kangaroo, had of late years become very shy, and was by degrees becoming less trustful of the settlers, who continually waged war against these animals, on account of the havoc which they committed amongst the young crops of corn.

The kennels were quite close to our house, and as the men in charge of them soon found out that there were sportsmen in the neighbourhood, they generally took the dogs in our direction when out for morning exercise, upon which occasions the men were refreshed with beer.

It was soon decided that we should initiate ourselves into the mysteries of kangaroo hunting; consequently more horses were purchased, and all preparations completed for the attendance of Chalker, Smikes, and myself at the approaching inauguration meet of the season.

We were all well mounted and had been busy schooling our respective steeds for some weeks previously, and, now that the day had arrived, were all eager for the hunt. My horse was a little green, and inclined to take his fences too far from them, but my lessons had produced some good effect, and I expected, with care and judgment, to be able to take and keep my place in the run.

The day at length arrived, when we assembled for breakfast in our hunting costume. Chalker wore his pink. It reminded me of similar preparations which had of yore given me such pleasure. I rode to the meet, but Chalker and Smikes had sent their horses on by the grooms, and drove over themselves in the mail phaeton. There were about one hundred and fifty or two hundred horsemen on the field and several ladies; and although the pinks

did not predominate still there was sufficient of the royal paint to enliven the scene.

We were to hunt a district well known for its splendid kangaroos. A fine open country lay before us, not thick and scrubby and overgrown with tea-trees, but good long hard grass, just the kind of country, not much of which was found about Melbourne at that time, and at that side (N.W.), where a good clean gallop could be obtained. Punctual to the time, George Watson trotted off with his well-trained hounds, leading us some two miles off the main road, and here the scent was soon recognised, not by one "well-known old hound," but by about one half the clean nosed pack. Half-a-dozen or more kangaroos were on foot, and each dog was on a different scent. This would never do, so the master got them together again. He had only just succeeded in doing so, when a doe, a regular flying doe, came swooping down upon us, having evidently been alarmed by something which had occurred in our front. As soon, however, as she perceived us she as quickly changed her course, and selected an entirely new line of country, darting off at a great pace, and, using her tail as an adjunct, she was not content with covering less than twenty feet in each fly she made, so earnest was she in her retreat. The hounds were quickly on her track; and now, for the first time since I had left dear old England, I listened to music which to me had real charms. A hundred scenes rose rapidly to my view in as many seconds, and I am afraid even tears of real pleasure came rolling down my cheeks. Never was soldier more animated by warlike music than I by this, to me, music wafted amongst the gum-trees of Australia. But I did not lose my head, for I knew my horse was still awkward, and would require careful riding. Chalker was soon beside me; I could perceive by his look and his seat that he intended seeing the result. The pace increased from time

to time, as at intervals our game came in sight, and had actually increased to racing speed. The field was beginning to grow much smaller, as in some places the fences were very heavy posts and rails (five feet three inches), often running upon the brow of hills, and these pretty constant, with awkward log fences, *i.e.* big heavy fallen timber piled up one upon the other just as it has been felled. At length the pace began clearly to tell, and our game was now constantly within sight, but both flying doe and dogs had nearly had enough of it. We had by this time entered a very swampy country, and presently our kangaroo disappeared amongst some tea-trees. George Watson and his followers were soon on the spot, when a "Whoo! whoop" told the tale that the race was over. There, lying in the midst of a pool of mud and water, was the gallant doe which had given us forty-five minutes of as good a run as the most greedy fox hunter could wish for. About forty of us witnessed the latter part of this glorious gallop, amongst them being my host Chalker, but Smikes was not to be seen. Now the stragglers were gradually coming in, each with his good excuse in explanation of his late appearance at the finish, many of them wearing coats which looked as if they would bear brushing next morning. I was presented with a foot of the animal, which I had made into a whip-handle in commemoration of my first kangaroo hunt, the tail being reserved for a stout gentleman, who looked like a family man, to take home to make soup for his household.

CHAPTER XII.

Cheerful recollections—The Melbourne kangaroo hounds—A stalwart tollman—Sam Waldeck's foxhounds—His arrangements—A cub and its foster-mother—A generous host and hostess—A narrow escape—An ugly fence—A mass of bruises—Dandenong—Gippsland—"Camping out"—Lost in the bush—The recovery—A successful day's sport—Opossum shooting—Parrot pies—Success.

WE all agreed we had had a most successful day, and I do not think any one wished to continue a search for more game. So we trotted quietly home, after paying a short visit to a road-side inn, where a notice proclaimed, "Refreshments for man and horse."

Chalker and I rode home together. I can hardly say which of us was most enthusiastic in praise of the day's amusement. On our arrival we found Smikes, who told us his horse had refused the first fence, and that no persuasion on his part could overcome the objection, and he had consequently made the best of his way home. We talked of nothing for the remainder of the evening but the successful inauguration which had that day taken place, and even after going to bed dreamt all night about it.

We now hunted regularly with the Melbourne hounds; we had a great many magnificent runs all over the hunting district, and in this way saw a good deal of the country, and were brought in contact with many station owners. Sometimes we were unable to find any kangaroos. In places the country was very rough, and a great deal of

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old fallen timber was scattered about, which the rider could not see until close upon it; but the horse invariably saw the obstacle and kept clear, or jumped over it.

I remember on one occasion in the middle of a run we were all stopped by a new heavy timber fence, which divided the brow of a hill; it was a boundary fence, and was very high, over six feet, and, as I have said, standing on a hill, no one thought of trying to clear it at first. Several dismounted and endeavoured to remove a rail, but without effect; two or three bold riders with trusty horses, then tried to persuade their animals to attempt it, but they would not answer to the demand. At length, after much time had been lost, a powerfully built man was seen to approach armed with a huge axe; with this he quietly removed the top rail, at the same time shouldering it, and taking his stand by the post. He then gave notice in a gruff voice, "that the rail should descend upon the head of the first rider, who dared to cross his fence, without paying toll." What was to be done? Much time had already been lost and more was ebbing fast away. Meanwhile, where were the hounds? And although there were many amongst us who would not have submitted to this bully's demand at another time, we thought discretion for the present the better part of valour, and the stalwart toll-man reaped a good harvest.

There was another pack of hounds in the neighbourhood, which were reputed to afford excellent sport. They were the property of Mr. Samuel Waldeck, commonly called "Sam" Waldeck. He was an old settler, and had been a celebrated horseman in England, and the best steeplechase rider of his day. His were fox hounds, and although there are not any foxes in that part of Australia,* still he never hunted anything but a fox. His arrange-

* Dingoes, or native dogs, a kind of fox, are plentiful enough, but are no use for hunting purposes.

ments were these: he had brought up a young fox, by introducing it amongst the family of a retriever, and after gradually destroying all the puppies, the cub alone remained. The cub, becoming very much attached to the mother, was ever after kept with her. They were kept in the same kennel, fed together, and in fact never separated. A line of country would be chosen and a place of meeting selected, and the day previous the retriever and the fox would be taken out together, and having started them, the retriever would be desired to go home, which order she would at once obey, closely followed by the fox.

Next day the fox was taken out alone, and when everything was prepared, he again was let loose in the same place, when away he would scamper, as hard as he could, home to his kennel, where he would be welcomed on arrival by his foster-mother.

The hounds were put on the scent as soon as sufficient law had been allowed to insure his safety, for this was indeed a valuable fox. But even with these precautions, "Reynard" was very often sorely pressed and would only just escape by the "skin of his teeth," often being headed by workmen and others, and obliged, on this account, to make considerable circuits. Excellent runs were produced by this means, and sometimes very stiff countries were selected. At the termination of the run, our fox would be found comfortably ensconced in his kennel with his friend the retriever, growling angrily at the intruding pack of hounds for making so much noise around their residence, and luncheon would invariably be provided for the horsemen by the generous and hospitable host and hostess.

I had a very narrow escape from a serious accident, if not from death itself, while enjoying a run with Sam Waldeck's hounds. Mounted upon an uneasy little thoroughbred mare, which had been lent me for the occa-

sion by a friend, and while jumping a new "cattle fence," along the top bar of which a wire had been run—a common practice in some parts to prevent cattle getting through, in case the bar rots or is broken—the fence was attempted without changing the fair pace we were proceeding at, and the mare striking the wire with her toe, we came a terrible "cropper," "one tangled mass of living animal substance struggling upon the ground." The mare quickly recovered herself and was once more upon her legs; but I was not so fortunate, one of my feet having become entangled in the stirrup, the spur being securely jammed between the leathers, in such a position that nothing less than untying the knot, as it were, could possibly get my foot out. In this predicament I was dragged along the ground, calling as lustily as my lungs would permit. Fortunately, Chalker, who had just given me "the lead," looking back, attracted by my cries, saw the danger, jumped off, letting his own horse go, and throwing himself in front of my horse, caught the bridle, to which he held on in spite of his being himself thrown down in the effort, and succeeded in stopping the career of my runaway steed. He was very much alarmed, and so was I, but I did not feel hurt at the time, and after a minute I remounted and helped to catch his horse, which had in turn been headed by the "whip." With some exertion, and a good deal of hard riding, we got in with the "ruck" once more, and a very capital run was concluded in the usual way, by seeing master Reynard grinning at us from his castle of retreat, while a good luncheon and a hearty welcome awaited us.

But before luncheon was over I felt very uncomfortable, and was now so stiff I could hardly ride home; and when I did reach home, and looked for my injuries, I do not think there was an inch of my body from head to foot that was not a mass of bruises.

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When the hunting season came to a close, shooting expeditions up country were planned. On these occasions we took stores to last the time we intended being absent. Taking a "tent" with us, we would proceed in the mail phaeton, sending a portion of our goods by pack-horse. Our first trip was to Dandenong, but as there was not a great deal of game to be had there, we proceeded farther up country in the direction of Gippsland, where we encamped. On this occasion we were a large party, and had two conveyances with us. We pitched our tent in the midst of wild and beautiful scenery, where we had ascertained game was very plentiful. We were all eager to make an excursion as soon as possible, so, after seeing to our horses and gathering a quantity of firewood for our use, we set out, telling the servant who remained to prepare dinner, we should be back in good time.

Once started, we wandered on for a long time, before it occurred to anybody that we might not so easily be able to retrace our steps. I, however, having had plenty of experience in the bush in New Zealand, well knew how easy it was to get lost, and had therefore been very careful in taking my bearings. This is no easy matter in a forest, where the sameness and monotony of the gum-tree renders the appearance of each part traversed alike, and this is a characteristic feature peculiar to "Australian bush." We did not get many shots, as no doubt it was too late in the day. We had wandered, by this time, certainly two or three miles from our tent, and as it was getting dusk we thought it time to return; besides which we were beginning to feel pretty hungry after our long drive and walk. But when a return was agreed upon everybody proposed a different route, some to the north, some to the south, some to the east, and some to the west. In vain did I endeavour to point out the proper direction; my suggestion was pooh-poohed by every one as decidedly wrong.

After again and again trying to explain how I had all through taken bearings, and that I was well accustomed to bush travelling, I separated from the main body, and with no difficulty made my way back to our tent, where I found everything prepared for dinner.

I waited some time, in hopes that by accident the remainder of the party would take the right direction, but in this I was disappointed. Dusk had set in; I knew there was no hope left, I therefore ate my supper, for I did not see in the least why I should not do so, since I had already told them before leaving they had but to follow me in order to reach our camp at once. It was a beautiful clear night; presently we heard a shot, quickly followed by another and another, but all from different directions, which showed me that the party had become separated; probably a split took place in the cabinet. I therefore again set out, taking with me my gun, and plenty of powder to make signals. Shots still continued. I knew them to be shots of distress. I kept as much in the centre as I could, so that I should be able to collect them as they came straggling within call. I quickly came upon two, whose further firing was at once stopped. They thought I myself had also been lost, but when I explained that upon parting, I went straight back to camp without the least difficulty, they at once became satisfied. We now fired a volley, to show that at least a large party were together, knowing the effect this was likely to have upon single individuals, who in the dusk would probably much rather join the large party, especially as night was fast approaching. We next collected a number of sticks and made a good blaze of them, again firing a volley, Coo-ie-ing all the time. We soon brought three more of the party to us; they also thought we were only like themselves, trying to attract attention from the encampment, and it was again necessary to explain that I had been to the tent

and had eaten my dinner. In a short time we again fired a volley, which was now doubled, and this had the effect of bringing the remainder of our party to us. We remained before the fire for a little in order to rest the last comers, after which we set out for home. This time I had little trouble in keeping the party together; we quickly reached our own log fire. The late party of stragglers did ample justice to their dinner, notwithstanding the many disadvantages under which the said dinner had suffered, having been kept waiting from six till eleven P.M.

Next day we regularly went to work, and this time the party, by mutual consent, agreed to be guided by me, at least as far as direction was concerned. We had a very good day's snipe shooting; we also bagged a great quantity of quail, and a number and variety of parrots and cockatoos. In the evening when it was moonlight we went out opossum shooting. This was managed with dogs; the dogs would scent the opossum up the gum-tree, and would then commence barking, making as much noise as possible round the tree. In this way the sportsman would be guided to the spot, and placing the moon between him and the tree, would scan the topmost branches until the little animal was discovered. He would then take a steady aim, and the shot, if successful, would dislodge the opossum, which would come tumbling to the ground with a heavy thud, which generally proved fatal. But often it required several shots to bring the animals down, as they would, when but wounded, twist their tails well round a branch, which often became so rigid, that even after death they would remain suspended for a long time.

We remained a week in our encampment, during which time we shot a very large quantity of game. We made pies of the parrots and cockatoos. The latter are very tough, and hardly worth cooking; but several varieties of

the former are uncommonly good and tender, especially some varieties of the ground paroquets. It is advisable, however, to remove the hinder portion of the back, as this has a rather bitter taste, and to add some slices of bacon by way of seasoning. A paroquet pie made in this way, sufficient for a large party, will require some forty to fifty birds.

We were quite sorry to break up our camp, and as we drove home every one seemed to agree that our first camping expedition was a decided success.

CHAPTER XIII.

Tasting the sweets of bush life—Comforts—Elnsternwick—Regrets at not at once purchasing a station—Beer and tobacco—Our neighbourhood on Sunday—My friend M. from New Zealand—The upset—A satisfactory explanation—Many thanks—Proposal to ride to Sydney—The challenge accepted—Our start—The pack-horse—Stock whips—The first day of the road—Animals and birds—"The capital hotel"—The intrusion—The free fight—The landlord punished—The explanation—The groom's flight and escape—Our wounds—Black eyes—A horrible appearance—A week at the Ovens—Lucky nuggets—Private claims—Chinese diggins—The old woman of Albury—The arrest in the name of the Queen for highway robbery with violence and murder—Arrival of the officer of police, the apology, mutual understandings—Departure of the groom.

WE had now tasted the sweets of real bush life, and shortly after our return distinct signs were visible of anxiety again to see something more of the country.

No doubt we had a very pleasant house at Elnsternwick, for that was the name of the place, and we were surrounded by every comfort which we could wish for, or money could procure, but it seemed a great pity that all this should be collected round a place which had only been rented for twelve months. Already some additional stabling had been built, and it was unlikely the landlord, although he had not objected to the buildings being erected, would allow anything for them, as the exigencies of his stud did not require more stable room. It was therefore, a pity, as I have remarked, that all this outlay should have taken place, and that a station had not at once been purchased, where all these improvements and

luxuries which had been collected would have helped to make a comfortable home, and been of lasting benefit.

Chalker and Smikes were decidedly reckless and extravagant, and the banker's advice—although I am of opinion it could not have been worse—exactly suited them, for they were in no hurry to commence the real business of life. They were both gradually getting into colonial ways, and were uncommonly fond of their beer, more especially the younger one, Smikes, who seemed perfectly content to remain at home, so long as he was not deprived of his beer and tobacco. This was beginning to tell sadly upon his general health. Chalker, who was some years older, was more hardened, and took far more outdoor exercise, and got through no end of riding, therefore he was usually pretty well, and a pleasant companion; he and I generally hit it off together, while the Scotch steward was deputed to look more after Smikes.

Our neighbourhood was very gay on Sunday, which is the great day amongst a certain set for a trip to Brighton and St. Kilda, the great suburban watering-places of Melbourne. But there was no turn-out could eclipse that from Elnsternwick, which might be seen about this time every Sunday afternoon at Brighton. My friend M—— had turned up from New Zealand; he was in great spirits, and as full of fun as ever. He gave me an account of all his doings after leaving the Colonial Defence Force, and concluded by telling me he had come in for some money, and had come over to Melbourne to enjoy himself for a little. He was staying at St. Kilda, close to us, so we saw a good deal of him. He was determined not to be outdone by Chalker's mail phaeton, so one Sunday, a very fine afternoon, he went into Melbourne and hired a long waggonette and a team of four. In this he invited a number of his friends to go down to Brighton with him to spend the day. We were rather late in starting that day, but when

we got within a mile of Brighton what was our astonishment to see before us a large waggonette upset in a ditch, and upon coming up to it to find that the coachman was a no less distinguished individual than our friend M——. He was endeavouring to loosen the harness of his near wheeler, which had become regularly entangled, the off wheeler having been got up, together with the two leaders. By our united exertions and the assistance which was at hand from a large crowd of holiday-seekers who had at this time assembled, we soon set everything to rights, when M—— again remounted the seat of honour, and, passing the ribbons once more through his fingers, landed his now nervous freight in safety at Brighton.

When I met M—— at the hotel afterwards he explained the cause of the accident to me. One horse was a little hard in the mouth on one side, and another on the other, while a third shied at everything, and the fourth was too lazy to do anything at all, the consequence being what I had seen, which he declared no man could have helped had he been driving four horses all his life, which, he added, he need not tell me he had not.

I told him, of course, I could now easily understand the whole thing, his explanation was complete, and accounted for everything. Upon this he was kind enough to offer me a seat any day I liked, but for reasons best known to myself I always steadfastly refused this invitation.

We were all most anxious again to make an excursion into the country, and see something of station life. It was agreed that this time we should set out in pairs on horseback; so it was decided that Chalker and myself should explore one side of the country, and that upon our return Smikes and the Scotch steward should start on their trip. Where to go was now the question; none of us, of course, knew very much as yet of anything farther than twenty miles round. Chalker said he would leave it

to me, and I selected a ride to Sydney; this rather took him by surprise when I told him the distance was about six hundred and fifty miles. However, he was a jolly fellow, and up to anything, so it was agreed that we should set out for Sydney that day week. It was now necessary at once to lay our plans and set to work with our preparations. We decided that we should take each our well-fed stabled horse, with a pack-horse, and Chalker insisted upon bringing his groom. The pack-horse was to carry everything we required for the road, as we calculated it would take us about a month to perform the journey, doing it quietly, so as to see everything of interest upon the way. When we had completed our arrangements and found our horses to be in excellent condition, and fit for the journey, we made an early start when the eventful day arrived. Our pack-horse looked very formidable when completely accoutred for the road; and to complete his medley assortment of guns and rifles, game bags and general paraphernalia, Chalker insisted upon fixing upon the top of all, between cross-sticks, a small keg of rum for our especial use. We could, he hoped, always get milk on the road, and rum and milk, he explained, was a capital thing to commence a journey on.

When we got clear of the town, and were fairly on our journey, everything went smoothly, and our pack-horse, who at first exhibited a disposition to get rid of the cargo over his head, seemed now to take things as a matter-of-course. We had provided ourselves with stock whips,* which we now commenced to practise with for the first time. I soon found that handling the stock whip was not my *forte*, but Chalker managed it pretty well, and in a short time became tolerably expert. His practising was anything but agreeable, as one never knew when he was going

* The handle of a stock whip is about nine inches in length, while the thong is often thirteen or fourteen feet.

to whirl this long heavy lash round his head preparatory to making his cut, and he required plenty of room.

We did not ride more than twenty miles the first day, as we thought it better not to commence with long journeys until our horses became accustomed to the roads. We found a nice farmhouse, known to our groom, who knew the road well, and here we got capital stabling for our horses and good oats; we were not, therefore, obliged to break in upon our own supply which we carried with us.

Next morning we resumed our journey; we passed through some beautifully wooded country, and met endless varieties of beautifully coloured birds, kangaroo, and wallaby (*Petrocale Xanthopus*). As we had our guns with us I secured some very good specimens, which I skinned in the evening—having brought my skinning knives and some arsenical soap with me, in order that I might make a collection of anything interesting we met with. Our plan of procedure was to start early in the morning, first having refreshed ourselves with some of Chalker's travelling specific; we would then endeavour to reach some small village or settlement by about eleven o'clock, where we could halt and make our breakfast, at the same time feeding our horses and taking a good rest. We would then proceed again about two P.M., and manage to reach the next stage about six o'clock, where we would rest for the night. We were everywhere hospitably received on the road up to the present. We were now about to reach our half-way station between the boundary of Victoria and New South Wales; our groom told us we should here find a capital hotel, where we should be able to get all we might require, so we determined to try and get there as early in the day as possible. We therefore started pretty early in the morning, and did not take a long mid-day rest, as we had about forty miles to ride, and in this way we managed to get to our destination at a

tolerably early hour. Upon our arrival at the hotel it certainly appeared to be capable of producing all that our groom had led us to expect, and upon inquiry we found that there was lots of stabling, and that we could have a private room to ourselves.

As it was pretty cold in the evening, after the sun had gone down, we ordered a comfortable fire to be lit in our room, and while dinner was being prepared we took a stroll in the neighbourhood, and admired the surrounding scenery. On our return to the hotel we found dinner waiting for us. When we had finished we sent for our servant to give directions about our horses, and the hour we should start in the morning; while this was taking place we were much surprised at our door being opened in the most unceremonious manner, and the entry of four big, rough, burly-looking fellows, who quietly sat down, and, addressing themselves to our servant, remarked, "You have come to settle old scores, have you?" To which the man replied, that he was travelling with his master, and had not come there upon any business of his own; to which they quickly replied, that if he had not come to settle old scores with them they were determined to settle with him, and one of them at the same time made a motion towards him. I at once jumped up, and said that if any one dared to lay a hand upon him I would interfere; no sooner had I thus spoken than a general onslaught was commenced, and in an instant the sanctity of our room was the scene of a most uproarious free fight. I succeeded at one moment in getting hold of the poker, but I was soon overpowered and disarmed. The door was now opened by any amount of female domestics. Chalker was then dragged out into the street, where he called lustily for help. I endeavoured to go to his assistance, when I saw him being pummelled unmercifully upon a heap of broken stones in front of the house. At this

moment a new arrival appeared on the scene; entering the house, and thinking this was assistance coming to our enemies, I attacked the new comer, whom, with a well-directed blow, I sent reeling in front of the door. No sooner had I performed this exploit than I was attacked from behind by a number of women, who pulled me back, tore my hair and scratched my face, roaring like fiends, "Oh, you brute! to treat an innocent man like that on his return home." The fight was now ended, and the ruffians had fled. It was very difficult for a long time to get a hearing, as the principal complaints seemed to be directed against me for my last performance; and, strange to say, there was my vanquished enemy, the petted of the party. At length, when order was somewhat restored, hot water was brought to wash our wounds. I had got two black eyes, a sorely injured nose, cut lips, and any number of body bruises. But poor Chalker was a pitiable sight; he was bruised all over, and his face was literally a jelly. But where was the servant all this while? I just recollected that he had disappeared at the very commencement of the fight, and he was now nowhere to be found.

As soon as matters had been explained, I found that the individual whom I had so unceremoniously knocked down was no other than the landlord of the hotel, who had been absent all day, and who had only just returned and knew nothing of the row. The females who had attacked me were his wife and daughters. The poor landlord had come in for a black eye also. We now held a council of war. We thought of course of having all the ruffians arrested and made to pay the penalty for the severe treatment we had received; but, when the landlord explained the matter, as gathered from his domestics, the cause of the disturbance became quite clear.

It seemed that our servant had been a tradesman in this very town some years before, and that he had

absconded, owing money right and left, and had never since been heard of. Consequently a number of them had sworn that if ever they came across him they would settle old scores with him. An opportunity had now occurred, he was recognised riding into the town with us, and this party had come together determined to have their revenge. They were prepared for resistance upon our part, and had calculated that we should have left our revolvers upstairs. In this, unfortunately, they were right, otherwise the fight would in all probability never have taken place. However, the mischief was now done, and we were assured that even if the men were arrested, it was very likely the magistrate would say we had been as bad as they, and we should thus only lose time; we consequently determined to continue our journey next morning. We now made a search for the servant amongst the out-houses and cellars, for a long time without effect. At length the door of a small house at the end of the garden was seen to open, and a timid inquiry was demanded, "Is it all over?"

When he appeared it was found that he had escaped without a scratch; he had found an opportunity of making his escape when attention was directed at the commencement of the fight to the fact that I had obtained possession of the poker, when several of the assailants came to disarm me.

Here was a gratifying incident. The culprit who had brought all the trouble upon us had escaped unhurt, while we had been beaten in the most shameful manner. I must say I felt very small, and the only thing that consoled me was the fact that Chalker and I had distributed tolerably even favours amongst the great "odds" who had acted with such cowardice.

Next morning, of course, our appearance was something very horrible indeed; we were much swollen and

bruised, nevertheless we managed to make an early start. We were naturally very angry with our servant for bringing us into such an ambush, but all this would not restore the pristine hues of our eyes, which were gradually becoming parti-coloured. We now determined not to visit any swell squatters until our wounds were healed, and made up our minds until this should take place to spend a few days at the diggings in the Ovens district. We pushed on as quickly as we could; when we reached Chiltern we were indeed very seedy, and when we applied at the inn for rooms the landlord looked at us very doubtfully before replying to our question whether he could take us in. However, a word of explanation soon smoothed everything, and we now settled down for a couple of days. Next morning we visited several well-known claims, and here for the first time we descended the shaft of a gold-mine one hundred and eighty feet deep. When we reached the mine we were requested to try our luck with the "pick," and of course we each happened, just by good fortune, to come upon the lucky nugget. In return for this we were expected to convey a quart bottle of gin to the diggers, who were not allowed to purchase this article themselves, especial orders having been issued by the proprietors of this particular mine against the men entering a store during working hours; the nuggets which were "planted" for us of course belonged to the men themselves.

This mine was on the old-fashioned principle of pulley and rope, worked by a horse, and we were let down and taken up by placing one foot in a noose and holding on to the rope by our hand, and guiding ourselves from striking the sides of the shaft by the other foot.

We visited a great number of private claims as well; some of the most remarkable were those worked by the Chinese. These were old claims, which had been "used up" years ago, and the refuse was now being re-washed for

the third time, and even then, it was said, these Chinamen succeeded in extracting a tolerable amount of dust.

While at Chiltern we had several invitations to visit neighbouring stations, and we were forced to go; notwithstanding our dilapidated appearance, we seemed to afford a good deal of amusement to some of the ladies on these occasions, more especially my poor friend Chalker, the whites of whose eyes had now turned quite red.

After a week we thought ourselves well enough to proceed. Indeed, as far as I was concerned, all the swelling had disappeared, and very little green now remained in my eyes, but my friend's were still very much discoloured; however, he would get over it quite as soon by going on. We were now within an easy ride of Albury, on the other side of the river Murray, which separates Victoria from New South Wales. Here we intended dispensing with our servant and horses and sending them back, while we should proceed from stage to stage on hired horses, or, where practicable, taking the mail coach, and we purposed, after reaching Sydney, to return by sea.

The weather remained most conveniently fine during the whole of the ten days we had now been absent, and it had every appearance of keeping up. Our ride from Chiltern to Albury did not bring us through a very interesting portion of the country. We reached Albury in good time, and when we inquired at the hotel for rooms, we were treated with the greatest civility. We engaged a private sitting-room, giving the *strictest* orders that we were not to be disturbed on any account. I had secured a good many specimens of birds for the collection I was making, and had just got well into skinning them when a knock came to the door, and the landlord entered followed by three policemen. No sooner had they entered the room than they pounced upon us, saying that

they arrested us in the name of the Queen for highway robbery with violence and murder! Our surprise may be imagined better than described: what could be the meaning of this? Highway robbery and murder! "A deal of trouble and anxiety you have given us; however, you are safe now, and we will just keep you here till the rest of your party arrive," was the only answer. We now demanded the meaning of this intrusion, when we were told that the "Clarkes" were too well-known, and there was no use trying to "come the fine," it would never do. In vain we tried to reason with them, but all to no purpose; at length the officer of the police himself arrived. As soon as he entered the room and saw us he demanded of his sergeant the meaning of all this. "Who are these gentlemen whom you have arrested in mistake for the bushrangers Clarke?" We explained to the officer that we were merely making a pleasure trip through the country, and were on our way to Sydney when we were most unceremoniously placed in the position in which he now saw us, with a sentry at our door and between fixed bayonets. The officer at once ordered his men to withdraw; we then asked him to be seated, and begged him to explain the meaning of all this, as the mystery to us seemed inexplicable. He first of all laughed heartily, and such was the absurdity of the situation that so did we; at length he explained that, on our entry into the town, we were seen by an old woman on the bridge, who instantly mistook us for Clarke's gang of bushrangers. This notorious gang, he explained, had been in the neighbourhood the week before, and had given a deal of trouble to the police, who, however, had failed to secure them; that they had "stuck up"* a

* An expression denoting the humiliation to which the victims of the bushrangers are subjected. They are obliged, in peril of their lives, to assemble in front of one ruffian, with hands behind their backs, while the other bushrangers search and rob them or the premises.

household close to the bridge, and in doing so one of the Clarkes, it was reported, had received a "black eye:" the younger Clarke was just about the same height, figure, and complexion as my friend Chalker, and this, he said, had given rise to our arrest. The old woman thought at once she recognised the leaders of the dreaded gang, and knowing the large reward which was offered for their arrest, had hastened to give information to the police. She had sworn positively to our identity, and the black eye seemed to confirm her testimony. No wonder that the police were deceived when they saw an individual, almost exactly corresponding with the information given in the *Hue and Cry*, and with the recent addition of the "eye." This body of police, he explained, had only recently arrived from a remote part of the colony, and were unacquainted with the appearance of these bushrangers further than description could guide them; but he, the officer, well knew them by sight, and of course saw the mistake. He now amply apologised. We, in turn, told him the story of our skirmish, over which we laughed heartily. Dinner was now announced, as the police had explained to the landlord that we were not the right men, and we insisted upon the officer remaining to dinner—this he did. During the evening he told us many interesting stories about bushrangers, and especially about these very brothers Clarke, for whom we were so nearly being arrested.

Next day we sent our servant back with the horses, having secured the assistance of a "stock-rider" on his way down to Melbourne, who undertook to accompany him. When he was leaving we did not forget to caution him against putting up at the same hotel, the scene of our free fight; but I am inclined to think our advice was anticipated, and that there was very little doubt he would give both the hotel and the town itself a pretty wide berth.

CHAPTER XIV.

The departure of our groom—Vine-growing—Palatable wines—Dram-drinking in Melbourne—Villanous brandy *v.* Cooling wines—Cobb & Co.'s coach—The landlord's apology—Our departure—Wet weather—Stopped on the road—The lantern—Chalker awakened—Grave suspicions—The coachman's explanations—An awkward likeness—Past a joke—Waggons stuck in the mud—A stage completed—A hunting friend's station—The annual muster—Turning cattle—Marking and sorting—Two days of real enjoyment—Wagga-Wagga—Goulburn—Roseate cockatoos—A day's shooting—A fair day's wages—Sydney—Quite at home—The Botanical and Zoological Gardens—Lady McQuarie's chair—Port Jackson—Well worth the ride—The coffee-mill again—Mary—Paramatta—Botany Bay—At Elnsternwick again—The groom's story—Smikes's expedition—The western districts—Smikes's return—Determination to purchase a station.

WHEN our servant had started on his journey home, we made inquiries as to the best means for further progress, and ascertained that we could get the Goulburn coach by remaining until the following evening. This we accordingly made up our minds to do, meanwhile accepting several invitations to visit gold mines and vineyards.

The district of Albury was peculiarly suitable for the culture of the grape. There were several growers making progress in this direction. German and Swiss vine-dressers had been obtained at great trouble and expense, and already the wine produced was obtaining an excellent name in the colony. We visited several of these vineyards, and were shown over the various places of interest. Certainly some of the wines we tasted seemed to be very good, and,

as far as we could judge, we thought them quite as good as, if not better than, the ordinary wines of Bordeaux.

A great deal of dram-drinking was carried on when I arrived first in Melbourne, but, before leaving Australia, I had the satisfaction of seeing, to a large extent, the substitution of healthy native wines. First, one solitary wine-cellar was established in Burke Street, where you could enter and purchase for sixpence a large tumbler of very fair average iced claret or hock, or a bottle might be obtained at from one to two shillings. This wine, during the warm weather, was cooling, wholesome, and refreshing, and was a marked improvement, in every way, upon the villanous brandy and other spirits which were so much in vogue. In a short time another, and another, of these colonial wine stores were opened, not only in Melbourne, but in Geelong and Ballarat, and this at once proved the favour with which light and cooling wines were regarded by the people. I do not know whether the reformation was permanent, or was merely a flash in the pan, as it is now many years since I was in Australia. I can only regret if anything has occurred once more to vitiate the palates of the Victorians.

We passed a very pleasant day among these vineyards, and carried away pleasing recollections of the hospitality which was shown to us by the proprietors. Next day we visited the mines, but they were not claims of very much importance, and, were it not for the fact that it enabled us to pass our day, nothing occurred worth recording.

It was necessary for us to reach our hotel early, as the coach by which we were to leave started at eight P.M. and travelled all night. When we were leaving the hotel, the landlord was very profuse in his apologies for the intrusion, assuring us it would have been as much as his license was worth to have hid or in any way screened us, so long as there was a suspicion that we belonged to Clarke's gang

of bushrangers; and, he added, *sotto voce*, there are some in the town now that are not quite satisfied you are not in some way connected with the band. We said good-bye, assuring him that we excused all he had done under the circumstances, and promising, if ever we returned again, to pay him another visit.

We were the sole occupants of Messrs. Cobb & Co.'s coach. As we rolled over the rough bush-roads that night, it was no easy matter to get even the orthodox forty winks, as the road was cut up by heavy waggons, and great ruts like small gullies were being momentarily driven into, independently of the constant admonitions and cracking of whips which went on incessantly between the driver and his team.

It had rained very heavily the night before, and this added to the difficulties of the road. We had now come to a standstill, when a large lantern was handed in through the coach window. I did not understand what the meaning of this performance was, so I quietly opened the lamp, and taking out my pipe, lit it, and was about to return it again to the polite individual, whom I now recognised as a member of the troopers. "That won't do," he said; "your companion must show up, there is no use in his pretending to be asleep." My friend Chalker had been endeavouring to get a little rest, but it was now necessary to awaken him, so that his physiognomy might be scrutinised by these rural police. Accordingly, they roused him up, telling him to take the lantern in his hand and hold it to his face. This operation he performed almost unconsciously. "Where have you come from?" "From Albury," we replied. Whispers were now exchanged. "He's very like the younger Clarke," I heard them say. "Yes," said another, "and they were in the neighbourhood of Albury last week." They then had some conversation with the driver, who presently came up to speak to us.

"Whom do you think," he said, "you have been mistaken for?" addressing my companion. "No less a person than the celebrated bushranger, Clarke the younger; and had it not been for me, they would now detain you both. I told them I knew you well in Melbourne, where I had often seen you driving a fine pair of black horses in a mail phaeton." This he said he had even some difficulty in making them believe, as they at first thought he might have been bribed. "But it's all right now," he said. Here he mounted the box and drove off. We could not help laughing over the incident. It seemed, without doubt, that a very striking likeness existed between my friend Chalker and this notorious bushranger. It was, however, beginning to get past a joke, and we did not know at what moment this unfortunate coincidence might get us into fresh trouble. Only fancy how friends would laugh if we were really arrested, and sent back to Melbourne under escort, as highway robbers and bushrangers! but we trusted sincerely this would not take place, and that we should not be troubled any more.

Daylight soon made its appearance and with it we were enabled to see teams of horses, which had been "hobbled" out all night, being harnessed ready for the day's start. Some of these large heavily laden carts had got embedded deeply in the mud, and it had become necessary for the waggoners to dig them out to the axles to enable the horses to make a start. At six A.M. we arrived at our destination; here we knew some hunting friends resided, but preliminary to making ourselves known we thought it advisable to get a little rest, a tub, and some breakfast. We ordered all we required at the inn, in front of which our coachman had dropped us, and soon fell sound asleep. When we awoke we found our tubs—real washing-tubs this time—and breakfast all waiting for us.

We ascertained that our friend's station was within an

easy walk. He was at home and delighted to see us, but was very angry for our not coming to his house the minute we had arrived. He insisted upon ordering a second breakfast for us, and when we explained that we had sent our horses back, he at once volunteered to lend us his to ride the next stage or two, but assured us he would not hear of our leaving for some time to come; but we told him we wished to push on as quickly as we could. Our friend's was a cattle station, and his runs were very extensive. "We had just found him," he said, "in the midst of their annual cattle muster." They were driving the whole stock into their strong yards, as they had no exact idea on this large wild station of the number of cattle and horses they possessed; so, once a year they were obliged to have a general muster, when those that were unmarked were marked. He invited us to join in the driving-in party, and we were of course very pleased at having an opportunity of seeing how they managed these things. We now mounted two old stock horses, and taking our stock whips which we had brought with us, we joined our host, who guided us to the larger party who had set out at daybreak.

We had not proceeded very far when our ears were greeted with cries and cracking of the stockmen's whips, as they approached us driving the cattle and horses before them. We now placed ourselves out of sight behind large trees until the animals had passed, when we joined the party. It was something very grand to see this cattle muster, the cattle and horses flying in every direction through the bush, their drivers keeping them going as hard as they could. Sometimes an animal would cut out or get separated from the "mob," then it would be necessary for one of the party to head it. This was often a matter of difficulty, and required a good and well-trained horse to accomplish. Sometimes the animal would be so

determined to get free, that it would actually charge the rider, but the properly trained horse would quickly get out of the way, and a well-directed cut from the whip would turn the infuriated beast. In fact it is necessary to trust a good deal to the horse you ride on these occasions, and the great thing is to be able to keep your seat, while the horse turns sharply in answer to every movement of the animal it is trying to turn back to the "mob." Chalker and myself made ourselves very useful in turning several, and we thoroughly enjoyed the fun; and when they were got into the stock yards the business of marking and separating commenced.

We remained with our friend for two days—two days of real enjoyment. We heard of one or two places near, which might be purchased very reasonably. We were now supplied by our host with horses, and a servant man to show us the road and bring them back again. Our next stage was Wagga-Wagga, since so celebrated in the great Tichborne trial. We arrived at this village late in the evening, and the next day, having seen our guide safely on his way back, we got a coach going to Goulburn, where we would be able to catch the train to Sydney.

We had now been nearly three weeks from home, and as Chalker wished to spend some little time in Sydney, we did not delay more than was necessary upon the road. However, as Goulburn was one of the principal districts of New South Wales, we determined to see something of it. We remained here a couple of days for a little shooting. We did not search for any regular game, as I was anxious to get some good specimens of the beautiful roseate cockatoo. I not only succeeded in this, but also added several varieties of grass paroquets to my collection, which now numbered a great many specimens.

The following morning the train soon brought us to Sydney; there I was once more amid the scenes of all my

difficulties, still I was very glad to see the old places again. After all, the hardships which I had gone through during my residence there had done me no harm, and they had given me a wonderful insight into every-day life. Here I had really learned to know what it was to be dependent upon the world. Here I had my experience in the daily drudgery of life, from sunrise to sunset, and had learned to appreciate the proverb, "that a fair day's work is worth a fair day's wage;" and this knowledge is more than many an employer of labour in our own country has learnt, after very many more years' experience than I had, a fact which probably accounts in a large measure for the number of "strikes" which have taken place within the last few years.

Sydney was quite new to my friend Chalker, so when we had arranged our things, and ordered dinner at the Royal Hotel, George Street, I showed him something of the town. I have remarked in a previous chapter that there was a very great difference between the appearance of Sydney and Melbourne, and that the former had a far more homely and English tone about it. This of course at once occurred to my friend, and made him, as he expressed it, "feel quite at home." We then paid a visit to my favourite resort, the Botanical and Zoological Gardens, which pleased him very much.

The next day we visited Lady McQuarie's chair, that favourite view of mine, from which I showed him the celebrated Bay of Sydney. It was a lovely and clear morning, and as the sun shone upon the picturesque little islands which make up the beautiful scenery of the bay, casting their dark shadows upon the clear and unruffled waters, Chalker declared that this view alone was of itself worth the "ride to Sydney." There were several men-of-war in harbour—English, French, and American—and these vessels, with their handsome shapely lines,

tended in no small degree to enhance the beauty of the scene.

We afterwards visited my old friend, the proprietor of the coffee-mill. He was very glad to see me, and surprised to learn that we had made the journey overland from Melbourne. I had told Chalker all about my experiences in Sydney, and he was now much amused with the account the old gentleman himself gave of the exemplary manner in which I had performed my work.

We also visited the Freemason's Hotel in York Street. Everything was new there, a new barman and a new barmaid in Mary's place, so I was quite a stranger. As we did not see the proprietor, upon inquiry I ascertained that the pretty barmaid Mary had gone some distance up country to housekeep for a very well-to-do uncle, who was the proprietor of a large farm.

We also during our stay visited all the places of interest in the suburbs of Sydney, the Heads, Paramatta, Botany Bay, and other interesting places. We had enjoyed our trip very much, and now thought it time to be returning, as we had promised Smikes not to detain him longer than we could help. We took our passages by one of the intercolonial steamers, and in three days found ourselves once more back at Elnsternwick. Here we were warmly welcomed by Smikes and the whole household ; we had been absent nearly five weeks, and had a great deal to relate with regard to our adventures. We amused them by the account of our arrest at Albury. They had already learnt all about the fight from our servant, who had arrived safely ; though his account did not quite tally with ours, as he entirely forgot to mention that he had made his escape at the first onslaught.

It was now Smikes's turn to set out. He had already made all his arrangements, and intended visiting Hamilton and the western districts. We told him we had seen

The banker replied that he was very glad to see them, but that he feared they had not been living in the economical way which he had suggested, as he had seen the handsome mail phaeton upon the roads, and being himself a hunting man, he was aware that the good-looking horses on which he generally saw them mounted could not be bought or fed for nothing. Chalker and Smikes now in turn assured the banker that they had merely lived like gentlemen, and in no better style than they had been accustomed to all their lives. "However," said he, "your bank-book will show the amount of money still remaining to your credit. Have you brought your books with you?" "No," they replied; "we have never taken our books from the cashier, and are unable to say with any accuracy what amount remains." The banker now called for a clerk, to whom he gave orders to have the books made up, and brought to him. The result was startling. I tell the story as afterwards told to me by my friends. The account of the elder showed a balance of about £25; that of the younger under £100. Here was a nice state of affairs: two young gentlemen possessing sufficient capital to start in a good farm, advised by their banker to do nothing for twelve months, at the end of which period it had been found that the wherewithal had dwindled away and disappeared! A scene now ensued between the banker and his clients, but of course the result merely was, that they were at liberty, when and as soon as they liked, to draw the remainder of their accounts.

When they reached home they were terribly depressed. At first they endeavoured to carry it off by saying they had heard bad news from home, but I knew no mail had arrived from England. At length, after some time, I heard all. I told them not to mind, that they could commence without any capital, and reminded them that they were no worse off than myself; and now, for the first

time, I heard that the younger brother had been left by his father's will only a portion of his money, when he came of age, and the remainder on his attaining twenty-three. He was now in his twenty-second year, and would therefore only have to wait some twelve months, in order to be in a position to realise his plans. The elder brother had nothing further to expect, as he had already received the whole of his property, the greater portion of which he had got rid of long before his arrival in Melbourne; but the brothers were very much attached to each other, and as Chalker said, "He would have no objection to manage the estate for a consideration," everything seemed once more to be set "a going." But how were they to live in the meanwhile, was the question? They had taken the house on for six months longer, but at the end of that time what were they to do? as the rent had not this time been paid in advance, and there were still any amount of outstanding accounts due to corn merchants, butchers, saddlers, and others. True, there was a good deal of property, and four horses; these would realise something at least towards paying off these debts. At length, it was resolved that they should discharge all but one servant, call an auction, and sell off everything, and then take a small unfurnished house, which they would themselves furnish in a very economical manner, and live quietly until such times as Smikes's money should arrive. There was still some time to run before the house would have to be given up, and this would give plenty of time for everything.

I was about to bid them good-bye, but when I mentioned my intention to my friends, they begged of me not to desert them in their trouble. They asked me to remain, at all events, until after the auction, and if then I had not something better to do, to join them in the unfurnished cottage they were about to hire. I did not like to say

"no" to their earnest request, so I consented to remain. The German cook was the only servant retained, as we determined ourselves to look after the horses, which need not give us very much trouble, as there was no necessity for our again taking out the carriage.

The news of the downfall of Elnsternwick soon got abroad, for, of course, the late servants spared no pains to make as great a story out of everything as possible. It was now reported through the neighbourhood that Messrs. L——, of Elnsternwick, were smashed, horse, foot, and dragoon. Soon the corn merchant, the saddler, and all the rest appeared with their little accounts. The corn merchant was particularly bitter; he had evidently laid in an extra supply of fodder, on the strength of the support and good orders he had received from the tenants of Elnsternwick, and he was, therefore, very much disappointed. He was told he would have to wait until after the auction like others, who had willingly agreed to this course, but he would not be appeased, and he summoned them at once before the county court. As no defence was entered, he obtained a verdict. We all thought it would end there, and that he would now await the result of the auction. However, he would not rest here, and sent an individual to demand the amount of the account with costs, or to make a seizure. This individual, a little Jewish-looking man, was very polite, and in the blandest manner demanded payment. In return he was assured that directly after the auction his account would be paid; but now he told us that he would have his money, or his money's worth, before he left the house, and in return he was informed that he would under these circumstances be obliged to remain some time. "Oh, no," he replied, "that is a very nice piano"—we were sitting in the drawing-room at the time—and getting up, he placed his hand upon it saying, "I claim this in satisfaction of the debt." We assured him the piano, a large

square one, belonged to the landlord, but he insisted that it did not, for that he himself had seen it conveyed to the house during our tenancy. This latter statement was partly correct, as the landlord had purchased it since the L——s took possession, and had sent it to remain in his drawing-room until his return to take up house again, so the broker was satisfied that he had made a good hit. We all tried again to dissuade him from taking the piano, but it was no good, and going to the door he gave a whistle, upon which two men with a cart approached. We told them not to enter, but as he showed us a warrant, which appeared to give him full authority, we allowed them. They now took the piano, and placing it upon the cart, drove away. Here was a nice affair—the landlord's piano seized! Next day I undertook to make inquiries about the matter, and endeavour to get the article back; with this object I walked to St. Kilda, the judicial district from which the order to seize the property originated. I called upon the sitting magistrate and explained the case to him, and was informed that if it was true that the piece of furniture did not belong to Messrs. L——, but was part of the effects of a furnished house which had been rented by them, and that if they would make an affidavit to this purport, he would grant an order for the return of the piano to Elnsternwick in good condition. Accordingly, the L——s, accompanied by the agent, presented themselves before the magistrate, and obtained the required order.

The next step was to call upon the corn merchant. He was much surprised when he saw the order, and became very excited. He threatened all manner of vengeance on the devoted head of the broker; then relaxing into great civility, told us we might take the piano. This, they now told him, they had no intention of doing, and that he (the corn merchant) must, at his own

expense and risk, return the article to its place in the drawing-room. Here Chalker ran his fingers down the scales, and pronounced the piano to be most horribly out of tune and scratched. The corn merchant became outrageous, and roared out that "he would not send it back, they might take it themselves." To this, of course, there was only the one reply, he must first have it tuned, pay for the damage done, and put it in its place in the room, and if he did not do this it must be done for him, and the amount deducted from his account. His rage and mortification had now reached its climax, and here we left him to cool himself and consult with his broker.

When we were sitting down to dinner that night the piano arrived, the very same broker and two men bringing it back. The broker was all politeness and smiles, merely remarking that it was a little mistake, and he did not—although, I believe, legally he had it in his power—make another seizure. We afterwards had the piano tuned, and the agent assessed the damages at £2, which made the cost £2 12s. 6d., not counting the expenses of the broker and two men for the double trip. This amount was ultimately deducted from the account when it was paid after the auction.

The time had now arrived for the sale. It had been announced in the *Melbourne Argus* for some days past, and advertisements on all the old doors and telegraph posts displayed the fact, that on Wednesday, at twelve or one P.M., an auction would be held at Elnsternwick, when a handsome mail phaeton, a capital pair of black horses, 15·3 hands high, which had been constantly driven in double harness together, a complete set of brass-mounted double untanned leather harness, and a large quantity of saddlery, consisting of hunting saddles by Kidd and Peat, together with bits and bridles, and all the paraphernalia of a hunting establishment; also two very clever hunters,

which had been regularly hunted throughout the last season with George Watson and Sam Waldeck's hounds, &c., &c., &c. A luncheon of cold meats, salads, and other luxuries was prepared for the bidders, and punctually to the time the auctioneer was in his place, and the sale commenced. The attendance was large, as it was known that some of the saddlery was very good indeed, and hunting men were anxious to secure it. The pair of carriage horses doubled their original price, and so did my hunter. He was bought by a gentleman who had often expressed his opinion to me that he was the best fencer he had seen out that season. For, after a few lessons, I had got him into very proper behaviour, and he had taken his fences in a cool and collected manner.

On the whole the auction was a success, and realised prices far in excess of all anticipations, leaving a margin after all debts had been paid; and the landlord, who was a good fellow, *did* allow something for improvements.

Next day the place indeed looked dull—no horses, no mail phaeton, an unfurnished saddle-room; nothing now remained but to give up the house to the agent, and pack up our portmanteaus. We had secured a small cottage at Richmond, a suburb to the north of Melbourne, and had hired a small quantity of furniture, wherewith to make it habitable. We were determined to keep no servants, but to cook anything we required for ourselves. There were four of us, for the Scotch factor had been engaged for five years, under agreement, before he left Scotland, and he was determined "not to be done." So it was settled that he should accompany us, and he took his part uncommonly well, and with the greatest good nature, helped to make things both pleasant and smooth.

We got on very comfortably for a long time, two of us taking it turn about to remain at home and look after the house, and cook the dinner. This generally

consisted of very simple fare at first, but after a time we became so expert that soups and entrées were attempted. But I am afraid it required a good deal of a certain kind of sauce, which a well-known Lord Mayor of London offered a mendicant a shilling for, when he implored charity from him on his way to a great dinner at the Guildhall. "I would give a shilling for your appetite," said my Lord Mayor; and I am afraid this was the same kind of sauce, which was necessary in order to relish our made dishes.

Smikes had long since written, making arrangements for the transmission of his money to Melbourne as soon as ever he became entitled to it, at the same time directing his lawyer to send all the necessary releases to his bankers, which would be duly executed before he drew his money.

Living so near Melbourne with nothing to do was uncommonly tedious. Had we been in the bush we could always have recourse to our guns. We discussed this subject seriously, and as all seemed to be of the same opinion, it was resolved that a move should be made to the country, and at a council which was subsequently held, it was decided that Queenscliff should be the place of migration.

Queenscliff, which is situated at the entrance of Port Phillip, we were told was a delightful place for bathing, and the neighbourhood abounded with game, so to Queenscliff we determined to go. We were referred to a gentleman there, who secured us a neat little cottage furnished sufficiently well, at a very moderate rental, and in the course of a week we found ourselves comfortably occupying our new quarters.

I had some friends living in the neighbourhood who had a large station, and I determined, if possible, until Chalker and Smikes purchased a place, to try and get something to do at this station.

CHAPTER XVI.

Queenscliff—The cottage—The situation and the Heads—The bathing season—A pilot station, &c.—The launch of the police boat—Smugglers—"Hove to"—Arrival of the sergeant—The telegram—Two hundred ounces of gold—A crestfallen sergeant—J. Brown—Suspicious whiskers—"Not wanted on the voyage"—Our position at Queenscliff—Quicksands—Myriads of water-fowl—Black swan—*Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno*—Shark-shooting—Beautiful islands—Mr. Admans—Rabbit Island—"Old Bob"—Transported for life——The Union Jack—His enemy the shark—A refuge for water-fowl—The coronation of King Bob—Visitors—Croquet—Other shooting grounds—Different modes of stalking game explained—Professional game-dealers—The "shake-down"—Snipe shooting—An excellent bird—An invitation to visit Mud Island accepted—Guano deposits—The breeding grounds of the "shag"—Eggs—A numerous army—Aunt Sally—Other ornithological varieties—"A southerly buster"—The old shed—An omelet improvised under difficulties—A dreary night—A welcome daylight—"Literally covered with water-fowl"—Our return—Given up for lost.

THE cottage which had been taken for us at Queenscliff was one of those constructed of "weather board," so commonly met with in Australia. It was a one-storied establishment, and had just sufficient room for us, and nothing more. There evidently had been once a small garden in front, but it had been allowed to run to grass, and it was now difficult indeed to distinguish even where it had existed; the cottage itself was most conveniently and picturesquely situated, commanding a fine view of Port Phillip Heads and the open sea.

Queenscliff was a very fashionable resort during the warm season, numbers of visitors from Melbourne and

other parts annually taking advantage of the facilities which it afforded for bathing, and the salubrity of its climate.

We did not arrive until the season proper was nearly over, but there were a good many people still to be seen bathing on the beach. Queenscliff was the great "pilot" station, as numbers of the gentlemen engaged in this occupation found it most convenient to live near the "Heads," where they could see vessels as they approached the harbour; it was also the visiting station—that is to say, here the health officer, the officer of customs (and the police, when required) visited the ships and steamers, in order to ascertain if any sickness existed on board, and to prevent smuggling.

I remember once seeing the police boat being launched in a great hurry; the sergeant and his men were dressed on this occasion in plain clothes, like detectives. Inquiring the reason I was informed that many persons endeavoured to smuggle gold on board without paying the export duty, and when this was not discovered until the vessel had left the pier at Sandridge, the police at Queenscliff were communicated with, and the ship or steamer was detained until the offending party or parties paid the duties and detention fees, or accompanied the officer on shore. I watched the boat as it approached the ship, which had "hove to" in order to await its arrival; the detectives remained on board about half an hour, and when they left the ship they were unaccompanied. I awaited the sergeant's arrival, being curious to hear the result. He looked very disappointed when I asked him "what success he had;" and replied, holding a telegram in his hand, "What could I be expected to do with a description like this?" here he showed me the message he had received: "Custom House, Melbourne. J. Brown, steerage passenger, red hair and whiskers; middle height;

homeward bound. Takes two hundred ounces gold, duty unpaid. Demand duty and detention fees, or seize gold."

"There," said the crest-fallen sergeant, "who could do anything with that description?" I said I thought it a very good and sufficient one. "Yes, but what if there were no less than three J. Browns on board all about the middle height, and with whiskers of a decidedly reddish hue; would not that make it a difficult matter?"

This really was the fact; the individual he was in search of had given the name of J. Brown, and there happened to be others of a similar name returning to the old country, amongst something like four hundred steerage passengers. They had hit upon one Mr. Brown whose whiskers looked very suspicious, but they could find nothing, and there is very little doubt the two hundred ounces of gold, if Mr. B—— brought it with him, had been allowed to go down deep in the hold amongst the luggage which is "not wanted on the voyage," and on arrival in England he would transfer it, in all probability, before letting his luggage on shore, to his person, and that of his family or friends.

We made ourselves as comfortable in our new house as circumstances would admit, and agreed, as we had done before, that two should undertake each day the duties of the house, *i.e.* make the beds, sweep out the rooms, wash up the things, and cook the dinner, while the others would endeavour to amuse themselves as best they could, either by fishing or shooting. Queenscliff was situated at the extremity of a promontory, which in front and at one side was bounded by the sea, and on the other by a kind of large salt-water lagoon, some parts of which were alternately covered and uncovered by water, according as the tide was in or out. This lagoon was nearly wholly composed of quicksands and mud. It seemed to be the favourite

resort of myrials of water-fowls, musk ducks, pelican, and black swan. Thousands of the latter might be seen sitting quietly on the "shallows," some two or three hundred yards from shore, as if aware that the quicksands were a sure protection against the approach of their enemy—man; for it would be mere wantonness to shoot with a rifle—the only means of reaching them—as it would be impossible, even with the aid of the best retriever, to bring them on shore if shot, so treacherous are these quicksands. What would the Roman have thought had he caught a glimpse of the lagoons at Queenscliff, after having written, for the benefit of posterity, and Latin grammars in particular, that remark which no longer holds good, "Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno?"

These lagoons were also the breeding places of the shark; here hundreds of these dreaded fishes might be seen varying in size from one to six feet in length. We often paddled a flat-bottomed boat, hired from some fisherman, amongst the "deeps," which were interspersed through the lagoon, caused by the rise and fall of the tide, where we used to shoot them with ball, and in this manner a good many were destroyed. There were numerous islands in the bay, on the margin of these lagoons, which afforded excellent sport; and many a pleasant day's shooting we enjoyed there. Thus these picturesque islands not only furnished amusement, but also a valuable adjunct to our treacherous larder.

One of these islands belonged to Mr. Admans, the proprietor of the excellent and fashionable hotel at Queenscliff. Here Mr. Admans had let loose a few rabbits, and in the course of a marvellously short time their name was legion. This island was named "Rabbit Island." Why not? It had been stocked about five years when we became acquainted with it, and its sole occupant (with the

exception of the rabbits) was "old Bob," a convict, who had obtained his ticket-of-leave from Tasmania. This old man, then in his eightieth year, had been transported for life, when quite young, in connection with the riots that took place on account of the introduction of agricultural machinery, which was at the time supposed by the ignorant to be the forerunner of a period of great oppression for the working classes. Mr. Admans was good enough, on several occasions, to give us a day's shooting, and on these occasions he would either take us himself, or send us in his little cutter yacht. We often went over in the evening, taking blankets and provisions with us, and by this means were enabled to commence shooting early next morning, which was much the best time to make sure of good sport.

"Old Bob" was very amusing; he would tell story after story of his adventures in Tasmania. He had tried several times to make his escape, but was never successful for more than a few days.

He passed a lonely time of it on this island, as sometimes it would not be visited for months together. He had a stock of provisions laid in; and a flagstaff with a box of signals had been supplied him, by which he might communicate with his master, in case of sickness or distress. Every Sunday regularly the "Union Jack" might be seen flaunting from "old Bob's" at Rabbit Island, for the old man had a great respect for the Sabbath, and I have rarely met any one who was better read in both the Old and New Testament than this old convict. He told me he had hardly ever perused any other book in his life—it was the only volume he had with him at the island, and the only one he wished for, and the old fellow read and re-read it day after day for hours.

He had made himself several canoes and flat-bottomed boats, in which he used to go out fishing, and, except

when the weather was very rough, he never was without plenty of fresh fish. He said the sharks were his great enemies, they took so many lines from him when fishing for his "flathead" or whiting. However, he had his revenge, for he often baited a strong line for Mr. Shark himself; and he used no other oil for his lamp but that which he extracted from the liver of his enemy.

As "old Bob" never fired a gun in his life he did not disturb the rabbits, and he informed me—the truth of which I was afterwards enabled by ocular demonstration to vouch for—that "his pets" did not fear him in the least. He also told me that when a storm arose in the bay, and the wind blew strong on the lagoons, it was marvellous to see the hosts of swans, ducks, and other birds which took refuge upon "his" island, for we had now crowned him "King Bob" of Rabbit Island.

Nearly every one resident in Queenscliff called on us; amongst others, my friends whom I have mentioned as the owners of a station about five miles distant. They invited us to their house very often, especially when they had any friends staying with them, and they wished to form a croquet party on the lawn. They were always good enough, knowing we had no conveyance of our own, either to send horses or a trap for us. I sounded them on the subject of something to do on the station, and was promised what I sought as soon as the busy season set in.

I saw no help for it, therefore, for the present, but to remain where I was. The life at Queenscliff was rather slow without any horses and no definite object in view; but then there was shooting of all descriptions to be had, and we could make excursions when we liked, and our guns almost supplied our wants. We were some time in our new quarters before we discovered the best shooting grounds; these were situated three or four miles from

where we lived; and the district comprised a series of fresh water and "brackish" lakes, which extended for some miles parallel to the sea, and about a quarter to half a mile inland. To these lakes the water fowl resorted every evening at sundown, there to drink fresh water, and to "roost" for the night. It was necessary to get into position in good time, that is to say, to place one's self on the margin of the lake selected, concealed as much as possible, when the sun was within half an hour of setting. Presently a flock of teal would arrive and settle boldly on the water, and immediately commence to drink. It would not do to stir them, otherwise the sport might be spoiled. "Motionless" must now be the word; soon the fanning of wings of larger game would be heard above—caused by a flock of, perhaps, a hundred wild ducks hovering overhead; these latter would cautiously move round the lake once or twice before ultimately settling down. At length they would alight right in the middle, encouraged to do so by the undisturbed teal. Now the moment had arrived; so taking aim at a bird in the centre of a thickly populated locality, the right barrel would be discharged, skimming the water in the midst, while the left would be delivered as they rose, and sometimes a dozen, often very many more, would be left *hors de combat.*

I have always found it much more difficult to conceal one's self from swan than duck, and have had very little success in lying in wait for these birds in the manner I have related with regard to the latter. I have found it much more profitable to take up a position in their course of flight, either from the sea to the lakes, or by placing one's self between two of these lakes and employing a beater or a second gun to disturb them, when one can generally get shots as they pass, taking care, however, always to fire at the head or neck, for they [illegible] a lot of very heavy shot if only hit about the b[illegible]

We made the acquaintance of a professional sportsman and game-dealer whose residence was close to these lakes, and when we went on excursions we always made use of his house, and upon our return late at night very often we would find an excellent supper of wildfowl already prepared for us, and a comfortable "shake-down," or impromptu bed, wherein or whereon to rest our weary limbs until "daylight did appear," when we would return home, taking what game with us we required either for ourselves or our friends.

Besides duck, teal, and swan, there was capital snipe-shooting all round these lakes, and, as far as regards really good shooting and amusement, in my opinion this afforded far better sport than dodging either duck or swan. There was also an excellent bird for the table, but one not at all well-known to possess this quality, a small grey heron, which, unlike the heron of this country, generally so very lean, was always in splendid condition. The flesh of this bird, when properly roasted, is excellent.

On one occasion a companion and myself accepted an invitation to visit an island in the bay, called Mud Island, where it was said great quantities of game were to be found, besides its being the breeding-ground of the sand-snipe and the "shag," or white-breasted cormorant. There had formerly been guano deposits upon this island, which, however, had been worked out, and it was now rented by a resident at Queenscliff, who cultivated some small portion of it. To him we were to pay our visit. Upon our arrival at the island he showed us the "shags'" nests, the eggs of which he collected and sold to the confectioners of Melbourne and Geelong. It was most amusing and extraordinary to see the legions of these birds as they rose from their nests in regular order, and keeping in line like a well-trained regiment of soldiers, merely marching some two or three yards in advance,

each file as it was disturbed falling in the rear of the others. The eggs were collected in baskets, and afterwards packed in boxes and dispatched. This trade, I was told, had been carried on for years, and formerly had been valuable; but continual robbing of the eggs of course had destroyed the "capital," and he was now glad to get five or six hundred at a time. The birds would continue to sit on their nests even after they had deposited and been robbed of their maximum number of eggs, so that it was no exaggeration to say a strip a quarter of a mile in length, and about one hundred yards in width, was thickly covered by nests, and thousands of birds would be comprised in the army I have described. So close did they allow of approach and so fearless were they, that had one wished to destroy them, there would have been no necessity for using gunpowder, as a short stout stick, such as is used upon race-courses in the interesting game of Aunt Sally, would have sufficed to deal destruction to any amount of them.

There certainly appeared to be, in the small inlets from the sea which penetrated the island, innumerable numbers of ducks of endless variety, as well as swan and pelican, but they were most difficult of approach. We were preparing to return well satisfied with all we had seen to interest us at Mud Island, when we perceived one of those treacherous skies which denotes that a "southerly buster" is at hand, and warns the mariner to take in his canvas. We were seven miles from the mainland, with but an open boat, and therefore could not think of returning; but we had made no provision whatever for remaining, and there was only the old shed used formerly in connection with the guano trade wherein to take shelter. The clouds quickly became blacker and blacker, and we had barely just time to get down to the beach and haul up our boat high and dry when the storm burst on us with

all its violence and the rain came down in torrents. We made the best of it in the shed; it kept the rain out pretty well—pretty well, I say, because in several places a regular deluge of water poured in through holes in the roof. It soon became apparent we should be obliged to remain where we were for the night, and to live upon cormorants' eggs, but how were we to cook them? we should be obliged to break up one of the egg-boxes for firewood. This we accordingly did, and soon knocked up a fire, which was lit from a box of *wax* matches I had provided for smoking purposes. But now another difficulty arose. What were we to cook them in or upon? We could depend very little on ashes from a rapidly-burning deal-wood fire. Happy thought! We would improvise an omelet and fry it upon a piece of galvanised iron, of which the roof was composed. Accordingly we mixed the omelet, which consisted of nothing but the plain eggs, in a tumbler we had brought with us. The white of the "shag's" egg requires plenty of shaking up, as it is clear like that of the plover; this we did by placing a leaf from a pocket-book on the top of the glass, then drawing a handkerchief tightly over it—the paper prevented the yolk sticking to the cloth—shaking it well in the hands. The omelet being prepared, yet another difficulty presented itself: what to fry it in to prevent its burning or sticking to the "pan?" The wax matches again. Happy thought! we could grease the pan with the wax of a few. The omelet would have been quite a success if we had only had a little salt.

All that night the rain continued, and all that night we remained very wretched indeed in our poor shelter. We walked up and down a great deal, talked a great deal, and smoked a great deal; and at intervals, when we did not feel too cold—for, of course, the fire only just cooked the omelet—we took forty winks. Never did mortals feel

more grateful for daylight; the rain had not even then quite cleared off, but the wind had gone down, and four or five hours would reduce the sea and allow us to return home. When we came to examine things more closely we found the water had been driven nearly up to the very shed, and the island looked as if it had almost disappeared, so extended had the inlet of the sea become, and it was literally covered with waterfowl, so great had been the demand for shelter amongst the feathered tribe. This scene recalled the words of "Old King Bob" of Rabbit Island, "you should see my dominions after a storm, how they are crowded by visitors requiring shelter." We fired a few shots and secured a considerable number of ducks to take home with us; and after visiting the "shags'" nests to see how they fared, and finding them uninjured, so judiciously had they selected their position sheltered from the south winds, we broke up the remaining portion of the box, lit a fire, and proceeded to make another omelet as before, which was washed down by some rain-water. We next baled out our boat, and about four in the afternoon, judging the sea sufficiently settled to render our return practicable and safe, we set out, and about seven P.M., after pulling hard for nearly three hours, found ourselves once more comfortably sitting before a good dinner in our little cottage at Queenscliff, relating our adventures to anxious companions, who had almost given us up for lost.

CHAPTER XVII.

Monotony—The light-ship—A dangerous attraction—Fishing—The "squid" or cuttle-fish—Chinese tastes—A brisk trade—A curious black dye—Cuttle-fish back—Across the bay—Large game—Our camping ground—Mr. Admans—A fortnight or three weeks' provisions—The fishing settlement—Landing goods—The war dance—Cattle-station friends—Sporting arrangements—Fine weather—Punctuality—The kangaroo *battue*—Swan shot—The result—Satisfied—Preparing the "venison" for the road—A good dish and manner of cooking it—A savoury cut—A dinner party—Further excursions—The wallaby—Countless numbers of opossums—"Catch 'em alive, O!"—Killed by a knock on the head—Skinning—Ring-tailed opossums—Peculiarities of marsupials—At the Zoo—Capturing young kangaroo—A kangaroo hunt—The "old man" on his feet—On the move—On the defence—The result of the combat—Sometimes "old man," sometimes flying doe—Reserved for future generations.

WE had by this time pretty well exhausted all the haunts of game in the neighbourhood of Queenscliff, not that we had exhausted the actual birds themselves, but taking the same direction day after day became monotonous, and we longed for pastures new and variety; so we planned other expeditions on a larger scale; but first we accepted the invitation of the commander of a "light-ship" in the bay to spend a couple of days on board his ship, and enjoy the excellent fishing which was to be obtained.

Accordingly we all set off upon an appointed day, giving over the house to a caretaker during our absence. We found everything most comfortable on board the light-ship, and the commander received us most hospitably.

It was interesting when the great light was lit to watch the numbers of birds that were attracted to it on their flight, and very often both duck and swan, during rough weather, we were told, came right against it, thus disabling themselves and falling on the deck, where all their troubles would be quickly terminated by the sailors, who would thus be provided with a supper.

A boat was lowered for us from the ship, when the tide commenced to flood inwards, and we would allow ourselves to drift with it, fishing all the while, and returning again to the vessel with the receding tide. We used the flesh of the cuttle-fish or "octopus," better known perhaps in Australia as the "squid," for bait. This would be eagerly taken by all kinds of fish, but more especially by "the flathead," a kind of gurnet, with which we would almost fill our boat.

These "flatheads," so named on account of the flat shape of the head, are uncommonly well-flavoured, and are excellent eating cooked in many ways, amongst others, producing a capital soup.

In order to provide ourselves with "squid" it was necessary to catch some of these fish by fixing a cork thickly stuck over with sharp needles and baited with a piece of fat pork. The "squid," in order to secure its prize, would seize the whole device with its long succulent arms; in this way it would become entangled, fastened on the sharp needles, and could then be easily got on board. These fish are great favourites with the Chinese, and a brisk trade is carried on by Chinese fishermen all round the bay in this article, which they salt and dry. Immense quantities are sent to the various gold diggings, where Chinamen are to be found, and where it is the principal staple of food.

A curious black dye, or ink, can be obtained from this fish, which in olden times was much used in manuscripts.

This black substance can be ejected at will, and is used by the fish as a means of protection when attacked by its enemies, blackening the water all round, when it easily makes its escape. A kind of gritty bony substance, commonly known as "cuttle-fish" back, found on the sea-shore, also forms an article of commerce, and is much used by goldsmiths.

Two or three days passed in this way afforded a very pleasant change indeed. The commander and his lieutenant were excellent company, and we passed very pleasant evenings in their society.

The great excursion which we had planned was to a district at the other side of the bay, a few miles nearer the Heads than "Arthur's Seat." There we had been informed we should find any quantity of large game, such as kangaroo and wallaby. But as there were no houses where we could stop, it would be necessary to bring our tent. Fortunately this article had not been included in the list of things sold by auction at Elnsternwick, it having been specially reserved in case of accident, so that if the worst should come the tent might be erected.

Upon this camping ground, therefore, we made up our minds to erect our tent, and to remain at least a fortnight. Mr. Admans, the proprietor of the principal hotel, and of Rabbit Island, whom I have before mentioned, was kind enough to land us from his yacht on the shore we had selected. We had brought with us a fortnight's or three weeks' provisions in the way of tea, sugar, flour, together with other commodities, and plenty of blankets to sleep on. With the assistance of Mr. Admans, who knew the ground well, we selected a spot close to a fishing settlement, consisting of a medley collection of New Zealanders and foreigners. Here we cut a pole and erected our tent. The fishermen lent us assistance in bringing our things up from the boat, and in the evening when we were all seated

round our log fire, the Maóris entertained us with a war dance. Next morning we were visited by the owners of a large cattle station close by; they were uncommonly obliging and kind, and undertook to show us where the best sport of all kinds was to be obtained, and they arranged for the following day a kangaroo battue. It was to take place some five or six miles from our camp; and they were good enough to lend us horses to bring us to the hunting-ground. We were, of course, delighted with our new friends; and when, during the course of the day, a messenger arrived with a quantity of potatoes, other vegetables, butter, and eggs, we hardly knew how we should be able to thank them for their kindness. The weather had been very mild for some time, and a continuance of this favour seemed in store for us. Our nights under canvas, therefore, were passed very comfortably. We were to start at daylight on our excursion, but I have always found that, except on very special occasions, there is little likelihood of oversleeping one's self in a tent. Punctually at six o'clock two men from the station arrived with four horses, and a guide to show us the way. We met our friends half-way; they were accompanied by about a dozen more horsemen from the station, who were to act as beaters. When we arrived at the spot which had been selected, our guides put us in position; we were each placed behind a tree, about one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards apart, where we were told to remain quite still and concealed until we heard the beaters approach, driving the kangaroos before them. There were six guns in all; we therefore commanded a pretty good area of ground. The mounted men had at once separated on reaching the place. They were to surround a large tract well known as the favourite pastures of the animals we were in quest of, and they were then all to drive towards the spot we were placed in. As they had some distance

to go, we had plenty of time to arrange ourselves in position. Our guns were loaded with swan-shot, and when our game came galloping—or jumping past, more strictly speaking—we were to discharge our pieces, aiming at the shoulder. Presently we heard the noise and clamour of the beaters approaching closer and closer, and my heart beat fast with excitement. I kept myself concealed as closely as possible behind my tree. Nearer and louder came the noise of the beaters, when bang! bang! went the guns of one or two of the party. I heard a thud, thud on the ground, and in an instant, quite close, at both sides of my position, came jumping by no less than thirty or forty kangaroos of all sizes, ages, and sexes. As soon as they perceived me they increased the length of their bounds. At this moment, watching my opportunity, I took steady aim at a fine animal, which instantly tumbled to the ground, and in a moment another had fallen to my second barrel, almost immediately after the first. I quickly loaded again, but some of my companions were more fortunate than myself in getting a second chance of discharging their guns. The beaters had now approached, which was the signal that the drive had terminated. There must have passed us altogether some two or three hundred animals, but amongst all the guns but four had been brought down, and of these two had fallen to my own. No doubt there were several wounded, for each individual declared that he had decidedly hit his mark; but unless a kangaroo when in flight is hit either in the back of the head or in the shoulder, it will carry away any quantity of shot. We did not that day go in for a second drive, as we deemed we had done pretty well, and our experience on this occasion would make us more expert next time. We now stripped the skin from the fore quarters of the kangaroo, then, detaching this from the hind quarters, the loose skin was wound round the raw portion, and the hind

quarters, the only portion used, were thrown across the front of our saddles, and carried to our tent, there to be cooked in bush fashion.

No venison I have ever tasted can, in my opinion, be compared with the flesh of the kangaroo, when properly cooked, after being kept long enough; and I do not know a better way to dress it than by putting it in a common camp-oven, and cooking it carefully upon the hot embers of a log fire. It may be so because one's appetite is much more genuine and real, when living as we were in the purest of open air; but, be the reason what it may, I shall always recollect, with greater zest to the palate, the roast round of kangaroo in preference to the choice cut from the haunch of venison which I have, perhaps, partaken of under circumstances of greater comfort.

We invited our new friends to join us in our open-air dinner, which they were very pleased to do, and they gave us many hints as to the best parts for cooking. We were in return invited next day to dine at the station, when several more excursions were planned, one to the hills for wallaby, and another kangaroo hunt was to take place, this time with dogs, and then another beat over our first ground, where it was anticipated the frightened animals would again have returned.

The wallaby is a smaller, darker-haired, bushier-tailed animal than the kangaroo, to which it is in most other respects similar. They frequent more hilly and rocky districts than the kangaroo, and feed upon longer and coarser grasses. They are also much more difficult of approach, and faster when put to flight. We were not accompanied by any beaters on these occasions, merely riding along the hills which they were known to frequent, on quiet old horses that would allow of our shooting from the saddle. We were fortunate enough to bag a few in

this way, the skins of which we preserved. The flesh is almost similar to that of the kangaroo.

The fishermen, our neighbours, during foul weather occupied themselves by making opossum skin rugs. There were immense numbers of opossums amongst the gum-trees all around; but in order to secure the skins uninjured, instead of shooting the animals at night, which is the usual mode—a rug composed of skins, unbroken in any way procuring a much higher price in the market—they capture the unfortunate animals in the daytime, when they are asleep in holes in the trees, by a very cruel but successful device. A large hook—a fish-hook without the barb—would be attached to a stick, and this would be poked down the hole. There would be no use hooking the opossum in any place except the mouth, as they can hold on so tenaciously by their claws that the animal might be torn in shreds before allowing itself to be captured. It is necessary, therefore to poke and annoy it until it opens its mouth to bite the hook, which it very soon does, and then the stick is quickly driven down the throat; thus the animal is hooked, and is now unresistingly withdrawn, when it is killed by a knock on the back of the head, between the spinal vertebra and the brain, and then the skin is quickly stripped off. In this manner a good climber can secure a great number in the course of a day, but not so many as may be obtained by a dog and gun; and I have often myself shot some fifty opossums in a night, and I have heard of very much greater success than this to a single gun.

Another kind of opossum, of the ring-tailed species, was also much sought after on account of the fineness of its fur; and a rug made of these skins was much more valuable than that of the more common species; but the ring-tailed opossum was comparatively scarce in this district, and it is less than half the size of the other order.

Opossums, kangaroos, and other marsupials found only in Australia and America, are remarkable for bringing forth their young in an incomplete state. After their birth the young marsupials become attached to the teats of the mothers, and are placed inside a pouch situated beneath the abdomen, and are thus retained until sufficiently adult to be able to shift for themselves. This remarkable method of reproduction can be seen every year at the Royal Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, in the opossums, kangaroos, and other species of marsupials which breed in the gardens.

"The kangaroos are essentially an Australian form, and include a large number of species, the whole of which are figured with great accuracy in Mr. Gould's very beautiful work on the mammals of that country. Bennett's kangaroo is the most abundant species in Tasmania, extremely hardy, and much the best calculated for acclimatisation in an English park. In favourable localities it breeds with regularity, and with very little attention would rapidly increase in any of the midland or southern counties, where the soil is dry, and the character of the ground affords shelter from the north and east. Mr. Gould asserts the excellence of kangaroo venison as a meat for the table; and the introduction of these animals would therefore be something more than a mere zoological luxury. Bennett's kangaroo, the great and red kangaroos, and the little Derbyan kangaroo all breed freely in their present position in the Zoological Gardens; and the young ones may be seen at any moment peering out of their comfortable quarters in the maternal pouch."

The young kangaroos are captured out hunting by pressing the female very hard in the chase, she (the mother) will then cast the young from the pouch. They are even then not so easily caught, and it is necessary still to remain on horseback for the purpose, and to stoop from

the saddle and grasp the animal in its flight, if it is required to take the youngster alive.

The mother, thus disburdened, in general, if merely pursued on horseback, easily makes good her escape. I had heard a great deal about the rough riding which was required in order to run down the "old man," for that is the name by which the full-grown male is known. I was very pleased, therefore, when our friends announced to us that all preparations had been completed for a grand hunt the following day, and that they would be able to mount us all.

We were to assemble next morning at our friend's station for breakfast, after which we were to join a large party that had assembled at the place selected for the hunt. It was a lovely morning, with a fine brisk wind blowing, just sufficient to dry up all moisture from the atmosphere, and thus render the day bright and clear. We arrived upon the ground in good time, and found those whom we were to join already waiting for us, to whom we were introduced. The dogs which accompanied them for the purposes of the hunt were unlike what we had been accustomed to in the more civilised neighbourhood of Melbourne. They were a kind of large bony greyhound, a cross between the greyhound and Scotch deerhound; and it was explained that instead of following their quarry by scent they hunted entirely by sight, and, consequently, we must be prepared for regular steeplechase pace. The district which had been selected was not very prolific in kangaroo, as it is deemed better to select localities where a few are sure to be found, but not in large flocks, as it is difficult under these circumstances to separate them, and the dogs are apt each to select an animal for themselves, instead of all keeping to one in particular. We were not kept very long in suspense with regard to finding our game, for the sight of these dogs is

very keen, and directly they perceive a kangaroo in the distance they are off at once, and it is necessary for the whole party, if they wish to join in the run, to accompany them. We were soon "on to an old man," who led us a rattling pace. At first it was very treacherous work riding through the thick bush, and it was necessary—and very necessary too—to keep a sharp look-out simultaneously for the eyes, the knees, and the neck. The saddles used in the bush have large knee pads, to prevent any injury to the knees, for it is impossible on all occasions, especially when riding after cattle through the bush, to prevent the face and eyes coming in contact with the branches, and also to guard against the number of hidden fallen timber which has been overgrown with ferns and grasses. The horse, however, which has been bred in and is accustomed to the bush, is itself very careful, and if the rider has a tight hand, and sits steadily and easily, yet closely to his steed, he is almost sure to be carried safely through all difficulties. The pace, as I have said, was very great at first, but it gradually slackened as we proceeded and the animals began to tire. Some of our party had already had enough of it, and a horse ridden by the owner of two of the best dogs in the pack had got badly staked. Presently we came to cultivated land, and here the kangaroo endeavoured to intercept us by placing a pretty stiff "log fence" between him and his pursuers. But he might as well have saved himself the trouble, "poor old man," had he known what the small batch of horsemen and dogs behind him could do in the way of overcoming these obstacles; and when he perceived that even this last effort availed him nothing, and that he was still pursued, he evidently began to lose heart, and soon came to a standstill. The dogs cautiously approached him now, cautiously, I say, for they were "old hands," and well knew the terrible use "the old man" could

make of his toes when driven to desperation in this way; and most of the dogs bore testimony of his powers by the large scars which were visible on their sides, for a kangaroo can "rip" a dog, or anything which attacks him, in the most wholesale manner, by the use of the sharp claws attached to his legs.

The dogs were now called off, and one of the party dismounted, getting behind the animal, while another faced him with a heavy loaded hunting crop, in order to dispatch him. This was no easy matter, as the kangaroo would ward off the blow with his arms and hands, showing the skill of an experienced fencer. He would often endeavour to charge his opponent in front, but fortunately for the enemy, who otherwise would not fail to feel the animal's fury, there was another behind, who would at this moment seize him by the tail, and, by a well-directed blow from his loaded whip on the animal's head, put an end to the combat.

During the day we had three or four of these smart gallops, sometimes "old men" and sometimes flying doe being in front of us, until our horses and our dogs, thoroughly wearied out, gave us notice that we ought to let the "poor old men" alone for this occasion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On the shores of Port Philip—Kangaroo venison for friends—A farewell gathering—Enthusiastic halloos—The solemn stillness of the gum-trees—Terminating the career of a brace—A final and successful day's sport—Miss F.'s alarm—The shipwreck—A tent full of dead—Emotion—A survivor—The story of the prize fight—A treacherous surf—The party who attempted to land—Assisting the police—Removing tent—Groans from the sea—The restorative—A recognition—Begging to be saved—George Strike of the "Butchers' Arms"—The recovery—Escaped death—The roll of notes—Our dreams—The search continued—Further discoveries—Found drowned—Robbing the dead—Dividing the spoil—The result—The return to Queenscliff—Circumstantial evidence—Attending a benefit—Unjust suspicions—Friends again—The "Butchers' Arms"—A generous offer—"Towser."

WE had already been nearly a fortnight encamped on the shores of Fort Philip, where we had been most hospitably entertained by our station friends, the F——s, and we had hunted and shot and run down the kangaroo to our hearts' content, and thought it now time, while the weather kept up, to return to our cottage at Queenscliff; but before returning we had been promised another battue, in order to secure some kangaroo, to distribute amongst our Queenscliff friends.

No better rendezvous could have been selected for our farewell gathering than the same district we had chosen for our first meeting. Horses were, as usual, supplied us by our friends, and we all set forth on the eventful morning, determined to shoot straight and not torment our game, by giving them a load of shot to carry about for the

rest of their days, which would be the inevitable effect of hitting them in any other place except the head or just below the shoulder. We were not placed in the same position as we had been on the last occasion, as it was considered by our friends, who had undertaken the management and details, that in the event of falling in with any of those which had been driven last time, they might with good reason avoid that particular spot. We were consequently placed some distance higher up, where it was thought they would have no suspicion of foul play.

The beaters appeared on this occasion to be a very long time before showing signs of their approach; but I concluded that this was on account of their having taken a larger circuit for their beat. At length, however, it became evident that they were not only approaching, but that, if one could judge by the enthusiasm of their halloos, they had plenty of game before them, and they were coming towards us with a great rush. The excitement was growing intense, as is generally the case on these occasions, for there is something spirit-stirring and thrilling in the cry of the beater and the loud crack of the stock whip, as they echo through the solemn stillness of the grand old "gum-trees." At length they were upon us, truly upon us, had it not been for the protection which the trees, behind which we had been concealed, afforded us, so great was the number of the kangaroo, and so close did they pass in the very midst of us. A regular volley was now fired down the line, and all was over, for there were no stragglers on this occasion, so fast had been the gallop and so closely had the game been pressed. I had, with my usual good fortune, been again successful in terminating the career of a brace, one to either barrel, and when I emerged from my concealment I found that most of my companions had also been successful, and no less than eight had either been killed outright or left *hors de combat*,

to be brought in afterwards by the beaters. We selected the youngest and best conditioned, and having quartered them in the usual way, prepared for our return to tent, well satisfied with the result of a final and successful day's sport.

We had proceeded about half way on our return when we were attracted by a young lady on horseback, who was approaching us with all possible speed. As she came near we perceived that she was Miss F——, the sister of our hospitable friend, and so serious was the expression upon her countenance, that we became alarmed lest something serious might have occurred during our absence. She did not keep us long in suspense, for when she drew up she said, addressing me with much alarm in her manner and tears in her eyes, "Oh, Mr. B——! such a dreadful thing has happened. There has been a shipwreck in front of your camp, and your tent is full of the dead!" This certainly was sufficiently alarming to warrant the emotion with which the poor young lady had announced the sad occurrence, and wishing, as we all did, to learn something more, I waited until she had sufficiently recovered to enable her to resume. When I asked her to explain what she knew of the occurrence during our ride home, she told us she had gathered from one of those who still survived, and who had been brought to their house by the fishermen, that those who had with himself been capsized from several boats that attempted to land on the beach, had formed a portion of a large party that had started in two steamers, chartered for the purpose, with the object of witnessing a "prize fight" planned to take place on Mud Island; but the surf had appeared so great when they neared the island—for it was blowing very stiff—that they had abandoned the idea of landing and forming a "ring" there, and had selected that portion of the beach in front of our tent, which they knew to be quiet

and unfrequented. But the result had been, that in attempting to land in this spot the surf had been as treacherous as it appeared to have been on the shores of Mud Island, and the four boats which had attempted a landing had been capsized, and as far as she could ascertain, all on board of them had perished, with the exception mentioned.

"The party," she continued, "that had attempted to land, consisted of the 'seconds,' the 'timekeeper,' the 'stakeholders,' and a number of 'backers.' Their business was first to select a suitable position, to ascertain that the 'coast was clear,' and to drive the 'stakes' and mark out the 'ring;' and when this was accomplished, the pugilists themselves were to come on shore, and the remainder of the passengers—some three hundred persons—who had come to witness the fight, were to be landed from a number of boats which they had brought with them for the purpose."

We were now quite close to our tent, round which we perceived two or three mounted policemen—for before this time the news had reached the police station, some four miles distant—and we could now see that they had with them a large cart, in which they were placing the drowned men. Upon dismounting we found everything as Miss F—— had described. Our tent had indeed been used as a place of deposit for dead bodies, which they were in the act of removing as we arrived. We assisted the police and the fishermen to place the remainder of the bodies in the cart, and when we had performed this unpleasant task, we turned our attention to getting our place to rights once more, and in order effectually to do so we resolved to "strike" our tent, and erect it some little distance farther inland. This, we thought, would be the most satisfactory means of getting our quarters fresh again.

While we were in the act of removing, one of the Maori fishermen came running breathlessly towards us, to tell us that while walking on the shore—it was now dark—he had distinctly heard groans proceeding from the beach; he evidently had become alarmed, through superstition, and hastened to inform us. It at once occurred to us that the groans proceeded in all probability from some of those who had been capsized from the boats, and had not been actually drowned. We, therefore, at once set about discovering and relieving them. One or two of the party started off then and there, while Chalker and myself waited to secure a lamp and a kettle of warm tea, and we then followed instantly. We soon came up with our companions, whose progress had been slow on account of the darkness of the night, and we now all proceeded together. After walking for some distance in silence, in order that we might hear any sounds, we distinctly heard groans, which grew more and more distinct, as we approached, and easily guided us to the object of our search, which we discovered to be a man deeply buried in the sand, with only his head and shoulders visible. He was unable to articulate, but he eagerly partook of the tea, the kettle containing which I had placed to his mouth; it was still very warm, but notwithstanding this, he drank ravenously of its contents. Presently he was able to speak, and begged of us to save him. My companions had been diligently at work excavating him from his uncomfortable position all this time; he was lying on his face, and had evidently been disabled and left by the receding tide covered by the sands. They had now released him from his almost fatal place of imprisonment and had carried him higher up from the shore, where again he drank deeply from the kettle. We all thought we recognized the features of the half-drowned man, but we could not tell exactly where we had seen him before. At last, it

dawned upon us that we did really know him, and that he was no less a personage than the well-known George Strike, the proprietor of the "Butchers' Arms," a sporting public-house in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, and himself a retired pugilist, who had arrived many years previously in Australia under the assumed name of Strike, a cognomen which had been won by him in some hard-fought battles, and whose collection of bull-dogs and terriers we had often been to see, when living at Elnsternwick. We called him by name, a fact which did not seem to surprise him very much, and he said he recollected having seen us before, and he mentioned our names also. We had been all this time rubbing him well, in order to restore circulation. When he had considerably recovered, he told us he was suffering from a great pain in his side, which we afterwards ascertained emanated from several broken ribs. We now got him on his legs, and as we were but a mile distant from the F——'s station, we determined to take him there. He was obliged to walk supported on either side, as he was very weak, and in this manner we succeeded, with some difficulty and trouble, in getting him safely to the house. Here he was kindly received by the F——s who had been attending his companion, who, he was now informed, had likewise been fortunate enough to escape death.

He was placed in a warm bath and given hot brandy and water in lieu of tea. This more congenial mode of treatment quickly restored him; and after he was put to bed, he told us all about the affair (which was merely a repetition of what had been related to us by Miss F——), adding that he was the "stakeholder," and that the roll of notes, now reduced to a wet pulp, which we had taken from his clothes, was the money to be paid over to the winner.

We now returned to our tent, where we found that

S——, who had remained behind, had put everything in order, and prepared a supper of kangaroo for us, and as we were very tired, we soon wound ourselves up in our blankets and fell fast asleep, to dream no doubt of kangaroo hunts, prize-fights, and shipwrecks.

Next morning, on awaking, we thought it as well once more to search the beach, but although we did not discover any alive, we found several more dead bodies on the shore; these of course we did not attempt to interfere with, and on our return to our tent the police had again arrived, and we informed them of what we had seen, when they at once proceeded to remove them. In the course of the day we walked over to the village to which the dead had now been removed. Numbers of relatives and friends of the missing men had by this time arrived in all manner of ways, by sea and overland, in order to make inquiries for their friends, and most of them had been recognised. An inquest had been held, and a verdict of "found drowned" was of course returned, and the bodies were given up to friends.

The Government, however, afterwards took the matter up, and a strict inquiry was made into all the circumstances, which merely resulted in a strong condemnation of prize fights in general, and this attempt in particular.

We could not understand, for some time, what reason the fishermen could have had for selecting our tent as a receptacle for the dead, and we were unable to deduce any satisfactory explanation from the man whom we had, on occasions of the absence of us all from our tent, left in charge. But the events which were now taking place quickly opened our eyes. The police had made a raid upon the fishermen, and had arrested about half their number. It appeared that they had robbed all the bodies as soon as they had found them, and it was fear that suspicion might fall on the house where the bodies were

laid that induced them to place them in our tent. "When thieves fall out, honest men come in to their own," however, happened to be applicable on this occasion; for, when the spoil came to be divided, a row had ensued, and information had been given by some of the guilty ones to the police, which resulted in the "raid." I have mentioned the arrest of the fishermen, and the recovery of the stolen property. Watches, chains, rings and money were now recovered, and the thieves were afterwards put upon trial, and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

We now returned to Queenscliff. We had been absent nearly three weeks, during which time we had thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. We brought with us a good supply of game, for distribution amongst our friends; but on our arrival we heard that suspicion attached to us, as being in some way connected with the late ill-fated occurrence, and we were therefore treated with a degree of coolness by those with whom we had hitherto been upon terms of friendship; and I must say circumstances were very strong against us, although in reality there was not the smallest particle of truth in the unpleasant suspicions. The facts were as follows: the two pugilists—one a black fellow—were both in training for the event, and Queenscliff had, by chance I believe, been selected by both of them as the place best suited for this purpose, and we living at Queenscliff took some little interest in the condition of the two men, merely with the view of speculating amongst ourselves as to their respective merits, without having on our part the least intention of witnessing the fight. It was also known that we had attended a "benefit" got up by the two men, when an entertainment in the "noble art of self-defence" was given by them, and the gloves had been supplied by us for the occasion. How strange then, it was argued, that we should have been here encamped upon

the very ground selected for the fight. The evidence at once pointed to us as taking a lively interest in the affair, and as having merely settled on the other side to make all necessary preparations. We had some difficulty at first in clearing ourselves from the charge, but when, in course of time, the evidence taken at and subsequent to the inquest became known, it appeared clear that their attempted landing on our shore was entirely accidental; and further that we were absent kangaroo shooting at the time, and could not have witnessed the fight even had it taken place; so people began to see the mistake they had made, and to apologise for their suspicions, and friendship was renewed all round.

Mr. George Strike and his companion recovered in the course of time, and returned to Melbourne, and when I happened some weeks afterwards to visit that city for a day, and called at the "Butchers' Arms," I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Strike convalescent and so full of gratitude was he for what he described as saving his life—for he declared the kettle of tea did it—that he offered to give a grand rat-killing entertainment, in commemoration of my kindness to him, if I would but remain the night, and on my declining to be the hero of this honour, he pressed upon my acceptance a beautiful little dandy Dinmont terrier, "Towser," which I kept during the remainder of my stay in Australia, and which I made a present to a lady on my departure for England.

CHAPTER XIX.

Forgotten—Black snakes—A numerous family—Visiting the S.'s again—A death in the family—The funeral—A heavy shower—A kind invitation—Good news—The Scotch steward—The accommodating grocer—"By a stroke of his pen"—Our departure from Queenscliff—Arrival at Mannerim—The family party—Well supplied with game—Hospitality—Permanently established—Parrots and cockatoos—The laughing jackass—More ornithological varieties—The Scotchman's letter—Our reply—Best wishes—A sharp fellow—Duke of Edinburgh expected—The picnic at the Heads—The supreme moment—Three hearty cheers—Chalker's adventure on the road—Horror—The effects of too much champagne—Next morning—The dinner-party—The council of war—P.'s excuse—Where is your brother?—The truant discovered—The green shade—"In the wars too"—The infection of merriment—"A hero."

AS some other accidents had occurred at Queenscliff besides that of the ill-fated boats which had attempted a landing in the face of the heavy surf, the individual incident was soon forgotten. We remained for some time longer occupying our little cottage, occasionally making excursions to different localities where good shooting could be procured, and on these occasions taking with us our tent, as we had previously done. Our time was nearly "up" at the cottage, and the owner was about to return to it himself, so that if we remained in Queenscliff it would be necessary for us to look out for new quarters. This would have been desirable under any circumstances as the house was infested with "black snakes," of a very common but deadly description. These disagreeable companions had manifested themselves in several ways; they

had been found curled up in our blankets, and I had on one occasion, when raking some cinders from underneath our oven, come in contact with one, which made its escape out of the door and took refuge under the house before I could grasp anything to kill it with. We constantly saw them disporting themselves in the sun, and when disturbed they would escape under the house, which was raised, as is usual with wooden houses, some few inches from the ground. In fact there remained no doubt that the ova had been deposited under the house, and that a numerous family had been the result. I now determined to see my friends of the sheep station the S——'s again, and ascertain whether they were yet ready for me, and with this object I called on them.

There had been a death in the family since our arrival at Queenscliff. The son who had in the first instance gone to Australia and started as a sheep farmer, had principally sought Australia for the benefit of the climate, as he was consumptive, and had afterwards been joined by his widowed mother, his sister, and a brother who left the army. He had at last succumbed to his disease, but as he had for a long time been in very delicate health, his death, although it was a source of great grief to his poor mother and relatives, did not cause much inconvenience at the station, as it had for some time been expected. We had attended his funeral before our visit to "Arthur's Seat," and the event is well impressed on my mind, by the fact that during the progress of the funeral, one of the heaviest showers of rain I have ever witnessed fell while we moved through the streets of Geelong, entirely breaking up the procession while it lasted, which was but twenty minutes; and so great was the flood caused by it, that the water reached the axles of the carriages we occupied, and as we passed uphill towards the burial ground, we saw several houses where the water was rushing

through the doors in torrents, carrying away tables and chairs and other articles of furniture in its furious career.

I was very kindly received by my friends, who, as soon as I had explained the object of my visit, were good enough to say that they were now quite ready to receive me. They also said they would be delighted if my friends would occupy a very neat little cottage at the boundary of the station, where they might stop as long as they liked; they could have meat and vegetables from the station, and when shearing was going on they would in this way be gaining experience, and could lend their assistance. Before I left we had arranged all details. I was to have a room with my friends, and to dine each day at the station house. I thanked them very much, and assured them that their hospitable offer would be gladly accepted by my companions. I hurried back to Queenscliff now with the good news. I knew my companions would be very pleased indeed with what I had to communicate, as this was, above all others, the very thing that would suit them. On my arrival I soon told everything, and as I had anticipated, they were immensely pleased. I said that the house would be ready to receive them at any moment, and they declared they were ready for the move at once. There was something, however, to be done before this new step could be taken. It had been stipulated that Chalker and Smikes were very welcome, but that there would be no room for the Scotch steward, who was still with them, and had now been for some time their companion on all our excursions.

The brothers, therefore, endeavoured to make the best arrangements they could, and succeeded in coming to terms with him. He had still three years of his time to run, but he accepted a compromise of two years' salary. Smikes had received satisfactory replies to his letters which he had written home, and had been told that his

money would be forwarded to him in due course. He had not asked for any advance so none had been sent; he therefore set out for Melbourne, taking with him the steward, with a view to borrow the money from the banker to settle with the man, a very reasonable business transaction under the circumstances, but the banker was not very friendly with him, and refused to do it. However, in the course of inquiries, they found an accommodating grocer and wine merchant, who undertook to supply the needful for certain considerations which I shall mention by-and-by; thus all difficulties were removed with regard to occupying the S——'s cottage, and the steward was paid off. Smikes returned with an immoderate supply of groceries, wine, and spirits, and considerably in funds, all of which he explained to his brother he had obtained by "a stroke of his pen." His brother shook his head, and warned him that the grocer would make him pay for all this very heavily, but poor Smikes seemed so pleased with his supply of wine and spirits that it made no impression on him. All that I have here mentioned was not explained to me at the time, and I was under the impression that relief had come to hand by letter from England; in fact I was told so, and it was only some time afterwards I ascertained the true state of affairs.

The time had now arrived for taking our departure from Queenscliff; accordingly we packed up all our goods and chattels, and after saying good-bye to old friends set out, having chartered a cart and horse for our luggage. We soon put the cottage in habitable order, and when this was arranged we called at the station to announce our arrival. It was my business every morning to ride round the place, and report the state of affairs at breakfast-time. We had a pretty easy time of it, and my companions were asked almost every day to join the family mid-day dinner. They made themselves very useful in many ways, such as

"fencing," pointing rails, and digging post holes, thistle cutting, and last, but by no means the least appreciated at the station, they kept the table well supplied with all manner of game, and it was here I first learned the delicacy of the flesh of the small heron I have mentioned in a previous chapter.

The S——'s were very hospitable and lived well. They constantly had friends staying with them, and were always invited to any amusement, balls or parties, which took place in Geelong and the neighbourhood. On these occasions they never forgot to obtain invitations for us, thus the time passed very pleasantly. There was always plenty of horses at our disposal, and I was generally accompanied by either Chalker or Smikes on my rounds.

The "captain," the ex-military brother, who had succeeded to the farm, was a very jolly fellow, and always tried to induce one or all of us to remain, for company's sake, with him in the evening. Chalker was his favourite, as he was most "up" in military matters, and was never tired of talking about them; so it generally fell to his lot to remain, while Smikes and myself smoked our pipes of contentment "at home." Chalker was a sad bushman, however; he hardly ever went anywhere without losing his way in some marvellous manner, and it was nothing uncommon for us to be disturbed at midnight by hearing "cooeys" north, south, east, or west of our house, emanating from poor Chalker on his midnight rambles, when we would one or other of us be obliged to "turn out" to his relief.

The fact of being now permanently established as an *employé* on the station gave me an excellent opportunity of adding to my collection of birds and skins. The variety of parrots, paroquets, and cockatoos, upon and around the station, was very great; noticeable amongst which were the lory, or king parrot, so remarkable for the deep crim-

son breast, the blue mountain parrot, and the black cockatoo. The latter bird never remained long on its visits; it appeared to travel quickly through the country from tree to tree. I never could ascertain where these birds build their nests, although I have made inquiries from persons who have visited almost every part of the country. There were also very many other beautiful and interesting birds of many varieties plentifully distributed through the district. Probably no other country is so rich in ornithology as Australia, and I think the neighbourhood in which we were was as prolific as any part of it. The laughing kingfisher (*Dacelo gigantea*), or, as it is commonly called in the colonies, the laughing jackass, is very remarkable, sitting as it does on the topmost branches of the gum-trees, almost inducing one to join in the hearty laugh in which it indulges, so good an imitation is it of our own. It is said to be a great enemy to the snake, and I have reason to believe it destroys a great many; although I have not myself witnessed this—yet I have seen a tame one which I kept constantly, killing and devouring good-sized lizards. It is also said of the laughing kingfisher that it attacks even good-sized snakes, darting from the height which it has selected as its position, and catching its prey in its large beak; carrying the snake up some distance from the surface, it then lets its prey fall, again darting after it, this time to find it lifeless on the ground. This bird is also excessively adroit in catching mice, and will wait as patiently as a cat at a hole whence he expects one to emerge. The regularity with which this bird's laughter rings through the bush at certain hours of the day is noticed by every settler, and amongst other trivial names it has received, is that of the "settler's clock." The Australian magpie, as it is called (the piping crow of Australia), is also a very remarkable bird. It is easily tamed, and makes a most interesting,

but mischievous, pet; they readily learn both to whistle and speak.

But were I to enumerate all the varieties of the feathered tribe which I beheld, I am afraid this chapter would contain little else; I shall therefore refer any of my readers who take an interest in this subject to Gould's valuable works on the Ornithology of Australia.

The Scotch steward had written to say that he had been fortunate at once in finding a good investment for his capital. No sooner had he assured the worthy grocer that he had received his money, than he was ready to introduce him to a friend of his, a wine merchant, who wanted just such a partner as he was, and strange to say the amount of ready money at his disposal was exactly the sum the grocer's friend required. So he had been introduced, and had made all arrangements, and was then writing from his office in the new stores. He had entered into a kind of provisional partnership, merely on account of the elder partner's desire for a little rest, as he had been overworking himself, and required a confidential and careful man to take entire charge of everything, and he merely accepted the steward's money as a kind of security for his interest in the concern. He was to have a salary for the first two years, and a commission on all orders, and at the end of that period he was to come in as partner. He was busy, he said, bottling wines and ales, as hard as he could. He had been already let into the secrets of mixing and clarifying; and he concluded his letter by saying that he now saw his way to realising a fortune in a few years, so he thought of writing to his *fiancée* in Scotland to come and join him. Nothing, he continued, could exceed the grocer's kindness, who was himself a Scotchman, and for that reason had taken a fancy to him. He trusted his late masters would fall on their legs in time, as he had done, and they had his best wishes.

It was pleasant at least to know that the poor fellow had been so very fortunate as he had announced, for it was notoriously difficult at that time to get into any *bonâ fide* good business, with limited capital at command; but then these Scotch, we argued, are so very clannish, and always stick so close together, and then "Scotty" flattered himself he was a very sharp fellow, and could do many things which others could not. So in reply we congratulated him on his success, of which we assured him we were all heartily glad, and that although we had not been quite so fortunate, we found ourselves uncommonly comfortable in our new quarters; besides we were daily gaining experience in the routine and management of a sheep farm, which could not fail ultimately to bear fruit.

The people of Victoria were now all very busy. It had been announced that the Duke of Edinburgh was about to pay a visit to that colony, and his ship might be expected any day. Great preparations were everywhere being made to accord him a hearty welcome on his arrival. Queenscliff of course would be the first place where his vessel would be sighted, and here, as the entrance to Port Phillip is tolerably narrow, no doubt a good view would be obtained. The S——s had announced their intention of inviting all their friends to join them in a picnic on the occasion, and we were to erect our tent near the Heads, the place they selected, as a ladies' room. When the eventful day arrived, we all had our parts assigned us. Chalker was to drive the dog-cart with a young friend of his, who was staying with him for a few days, and he was to take the hampers of wine. Smikes was to accompany the ladies in the carriage, and I was left to find my way on horseback. As we journeyed towards Queenscliff, the road was crowded with horsemen, pedestrians, and all manner of traps, on their way ostensibly to see the Duke pass, but in reality bent on spending a pleasant day, for the weather was

lovely. On our arrival the place looked quite gay; banners were flying from every window, the lighthouse was gaily decorated, all manner of amusements had been got up, and a cricket match was announced between the townspeople and a local club. Our tent stood out pre-eminently amidst all these gaieties, and in the midst of all the youth, beauty, and fashion of Queenscliff and Geelong. Our picnic was a complete success, the young ladies were delighted with everything; the ship had been signalled for some hours, and every one awaited the moment when, with the assistance of field glasses, a glance might be obtained of the Royal Duke. At length that happy moment arrived; all eyes were strained on the ship, a salute was fired from the battery, and three hearty cheers greeted the ears of the naval prince and were duly responded to by the blue jackets on board, and the *Galatea* sped onward for Melbourne. All was now over; it was getting late, and time once more to return, and I think all appeared well satisfied with what had been seen, and the pleasant day we had passed.

Smikes and myself returned in the same order as we went, but Chalker and his friend remained behind. It was getting late that evening, when we began to suspect that Chalker and his friend must either have remained at Queenscliff for the night, or lost their way, and we rather inclined to the latter supposition; but we were not kept long in doubt, for we now heard the approach of wheels and knew it must be them. When they arrived and we had put the horse up for the night, Chalker told us that they had missed their way; they had left shortly after us, and had endeavoured by leaving the main road to make a short cut through the bush—for Chalker really thought himself a capital bushman—and they had been wandering about ever since. I did not pity either Chalker or his friend much, as I had seen them at luncheon, but I pitied

the horse that had been made to suffer for their stupid mistakes; but when we reached the light and obtained a glimpse of their intellectual faces—horror!—they had both disfigured faces, black eyes. I had seen Chalker in this plight before, and knew it was through no fault of his own, but how came this? It was soon explained; they both had imbibed a little too much champagne, and on their way home, when they discovered they were on the wrong track, had disputed about the road, and from words had come to blows. They soon had made it up again, as the fumes of the wine passed away, and had agreed to leave everything now to the horse, which had consequently brought them home, for this was now the most direct route to its stable. Of course as they were friends again, we thought the least said the better, and we shortly afterwards retired to rest for the night.

Next morning at breakfast, after they had both had time to reflect on the matter, and have a good look at their faces, they were of course very sorry for what had happened, but when they were reminded we were all to join the large party at dinner that were staying at the station, there to meet the young ladies, and afterwards play croquet, it indeed became serious. However, as there was no doubt Mrs. S—— would be much disappointed if all the young gentlemen did not turn up—for she was short of the male element—something must be done; so a council was held, with the following result. Chalker's friend was to go with us to dinner, and could make for excuse with regard to the disfigurement to his face that he had joined in the game of cricket on the green, and had unfortunately been struck in the eye by the ball. This Chalker declared would do capitally as an excuse for his friend, and he would not appear at all—and we were to apologise for his absence and say he was not very well.

It was now time to make a start. Chalker had

announced his intention of walking over with us, but keeping out of sight; and by way of hiding his eye and protecting it from the sun, he had adorned himself with a green shade, the same that he had used during his last accident. We managed purposely only to arrive just in time for dinner, so that no one would be absent and the one explanation would thus do for all. As soon as we had taken our places the lady of the house, Mrs. S——, perceived for the first time the discoloration of poor P——'s eye, and remarked, "You appear to have been in the wars, Mr. P——."

"Yes," replied poor P——. "I was playing cricket at Queenscliff yesterday after you left, and in endeavouring to catch a ball, it unfortunately struck me in the eye." "How very unfortunate!" was the only remark that followed this seemingly reasonable excuse. "But," asked the hostess, turning to Smikes, "where is your brother; how is it he has not joined us?" "My brother," replied Smikes, "begs you will excuse his absence to-day, he is not feeling very well." "I hope it is nothing serious; where is he?" "Oh, it is nothing serious, he is in the stable; he walked over with us." "Ah," then replied the good-natured hostess, "he cannot be so very bad, he must come in, and at least take some soup and a glass of wine," and turning to her son she requested him to go and make Mr. L—— come in. This he accordingly hastened to do, and in a few minutes returned triumphant, leading the now truly miserable Chalker, adorned as he was with the green shade, and whom he placed in a vacant seat, which had been arranged by Mrs. S——, between two young ladies. As soon as he was seated, Mrs. S—— looked at him in astonishment, and exclaimed, "What, can it be possible that you, Mr. L—— have been in the wars too?" "Oh," replied the wretched L——, "no—yes;" and hazarding the first excuse that came into his

head, in the nervous excitement of the moment—"yes, I was playing cricket at Queenscliff yesterday after you left, and the ball struck me in the eye." If the Duke of Edinburgh himself had at the moment entered the room, the astonishment of the company could not have been greater than was that of the guests at this reply; the etiquette of the dinner-table was completely disturbed, and peals of laughter resounded from every seat; the infection was even caught by the domestics, and for some time all other thoughts except the idea of laughing at the miserable predicament of Chalker and his friend were completely forgotten.

Poor Chalker could not understand what it all meant, until during the progress of dinner, when seriousness had been restored, the matter was explained to him by his fair friends on either side. Of course the hostess was too well bred to make any further remarks, and Chalker was left to enjoy himself like—I was going to say, any other of the company, but no, he was now the hero of the day.

CHAPTER XX.

Another letter from the Scotchman—If you want a thing done, do it yourself—Result of the grocer's advice—The bird had flown—The Duke of Edinburgh again—The lucky digger—A case of mistaken royalty—Three cheers for his Royal Highness—Over the way at the hotel—The result—The ball—The shearing season—"Keeping tally"—King Billy and his kinsmen—A season of festivity—The "boomerang"—"Black trackers"—Wonderful sagacity—Description of Mannerim Station—The inmates—The cottage—The end of the shearing season—"A spree" proposed—Letters from home—The remittance and the consequences—A resolve—Contemplated pleasures—"Which is the victim?"—An objection lodged by the ladies—The invitations issued and preparations made—Choosing the ground.

ANOTHER letter had been received from the fortunate (?) Scotchman, but this time the whole tenor of the communication was changed, and poor Scotty was in a sad plight. The concern he had been induced to join had turned out a swindle, and he had been robbed of everything he possessed. After signing an agreement, and paying over his money, he had been, as he said in his last letter, installed in office, and was even then bottling, and mixing, and clarifying wines and ales; he had no assistant, and had been reminded that this was the only way to get on in the colonies. "A man must work hard," explained the senior partner, "to get on in Australia; he must learn to know that if he wants a thing done he must do it himself if he wishes for success, and that wages eat up everything where labour was still so high." Thus poor S—— was induced to believe that

he was not alone making money but saving money, and this was milk-and-honey to him. He had worked very hard for six weeks; had bottled every drop of wine in the stores, and had received orders signed by the senior partner which he had sent out and duly entered in the books. His prospects had appeared very good. Every day for the last week he had received an order signed by his employer, "Please deliver so many dozen of wine to bearer." "Please deliver so many dozen of ale," &c., &c., and of course he had given them accordingly. His master had been too busy canvassing for orders to call at the stores, but would do so in good time, when he would bring a list of the customers for entry; but at last all the wine had been bottled and "sold," and so unfortunately had he, for he had discovered the whole thing to be a swindle, and he had not only been duped out of his money—all he possessed in the world—but he had been made to work like a slave.

When, day after day his employer did not turn up, he thought it time to make enquiries, when he ascertained that the bird had flown, and his whereabouts could not be discovered. Of course, he at once applied to the grocer who had introduced him, but he merely told him that he was much surprised, and that it was a most serious affair for him, for he had supplied the barrels of wine, and had trusted, and would have trusted him for any amount. All he could say, therefore, was that although he was very sorry, he was in no way responsible, and could do nothing more.

This was all the satisfaction the poor Scotchman got. I do not believe Mr. B——, the grocer, was a Scotchman, although he represented himself as such in order the easier to lay hold of his prey, but there can be no doubt he was in league with the swindler, who was never afterwards heard of; and still this grocer, who had a large store at a corner of two of the principal streets,

carried on his business unmolested, and may still do so for aught I know to the contrary.

The Duke of Edinburgh had thrown Geelong into a state of excitement—he had been to Melbourne, and "done it"— he was now about to visit the mines of Ballarat, where he was to turn up wonderful nuggets to reward him for his trouble, which had previously been "planted" for the purpose, in order that he might ever afterwards consider himself a lucky digger. He was to visit Geelong on his way, where he was to spend the day, and remain the night. Of course, there was a long programme arranged for his entertainment, and a grand ball was to be given in his honour, to which every one was going, and amongst the number the humble assistants on "Mannerim" station. It was to be a great day, and when we arrived the town was literally crammed with people, all anxious to get a glimpse at royalty, to remind them of the old country—in fact it had more the appearance of a fair or race meeting than anything else; there were merry-go-rounds, peep-shows, and the usual additions of thimble-riggers and roulette men, all over the Market Square. It was while indulging in the latter game, "pour passer le temps," in company with my faithful companion Chalker, that we noticed a large crowd collecting round us. It was reported that the Prince had arrived and had gone to the Market Square to mingle amongst the crowd. All were eager to get near him, but as the real prince could not be found, for he had not come, it was necessary that some one should take his place. All eyes were now fixed on me, hats were taken off in every direction. I had donned at the time a "cabbage-tree hat," knee breeches and leggings, very unlike the neat frock coat and "high hat" in which the Duke afterwards appeared, but they would have it that I was the Prince, and three deafening cheers, which were taken up all round us, were now given for me.

Things were getting very serious. Chalker was beginning to get alarmed, and suggested that we should move on; but no sooner had we attempted to do so than a deputation of "diggers from Ballarat" came up to us, hats in hand, and the spokesman of the party thus addressed us: "We recognised you the minute ever we seen your Royal Highness, notwithstanding the disguise you're dressed in, and we have come all the way from Ballarat, where we hope to see you in the morning, to welcome you; and as we have to go back by train in half an hour we make so bold as to ask your Royal Highness and your secretary there," addressing Chalker, "to just step over the way to the hotel and drink a glass of wine with us before we go." I assured them that I was not his Royal Highness, but I was only interrupted by cries of, "We know you; we know you." "Sure you're not too proud to drink a glass of wine with us." I now saw there was no help for it, so I followed them; two or three of the leaders showed me the way, and I was ushered into the hall of the hotel, where, much to the amusement of the proprietor to whom we were known, I was addressed as "Your Royal Highness," and made to drink the health of all the diggers and gold miners in Ballarat in execrable champagne. The proprietor understood the joke at once, and enjoyed the thing immensely. Three more cheers were given when I wished my friends good-bye, saying that this was my hotel, and I was then going to dinner—thus managing to make my excape. I was afterwards assured by the proprietor, who had returned to listen to the remarks, and to continue his harvest, that I was voted to be a real prince in every respect, "and most civil spoken, and very like my mother," and he assured me that they would leave Geelong quite certain they had seen, conversed, and drunk with Prince Alfred, and probably they would never find out their mistake.

The ball which took place in the evening was in every way a success; the prince seemed to enjoy himself immensely, and danced a great deal. I related the case of mistaken identity which had taken place to his equerry, to whom I was introduced, much to his amusement, and I have no doubt it afterwards reached the prince himself.

The busiest time of the year was fast approaching, viz., the shearing season. We had about twenty thousand sheep to divest of their wool. We were now busily occupied in getting everything ready for the "shearers." It was no easy matter to get together a sufficient number of hands; however, there were several "old ones" belonging to the station, and these, with some eight or ten additional helps, would soon get the wool off. Our business was to keep "tally," that is to say, to keep an account of the fleeces as they were taken from the sheep; some shearers kept a tally of their own as well on a piece of stick, upon which they cut a notch for each fleece. We also had to assist in "baleing," or packing the wool, and branding the shorn sheep before letting them out of the pens, so that we had plenty to do, and it was necessary to work hard indeed to keep pace with the shearers, and at the same time see that everything was in order. During the progress of our work we were visited by "King William," and his two next of kin. "King Billy," as he was more commonly called by the disrespectful, was the lineal descendant of the last native king of a large district, or country, watered by the Murray River. They had come to look on at the operations of the settler, who had supplanted them and their race, and to meditate, if they ever did such a thing, on the superiority of the new plant. The aborigines of Australia are a truly worthless and degraded race, and no amount of civilisation seems to have had any beneficial results, as, on the contrary, it has almost annihilated them. The only thing they seem to

have taken to with any kind of energy has been the consumption of rum and tobacco, and these articles they consume in large quantities.

King William and his brethren had come to pay a visit for no other purpose than to see what they could get to drink. They well knew that shearing time is a season of festivity, and they looked forward to being well supplied with liquor; and by travelling from station to station they hoped to be enabled to get very drunk every evening. They were wonderful hands at throwing the "boomerang;" a weapon with which the Australian is very expert in bringing down game; and it has the peculiarity, after being thrown, of again returning to the feet. We had an opportunity of seeing this weapon used to advantage as their hands were still pretty steady, the shearing season having only just set in, and on several occasions we witnessed some marvellous expertness with the "boomerang," which they sent with such accuracy when aimed at birds on the topmost branches of trees that the mark was seldom missed, the weapon again returning to the spot from which it was first directed.

The blacks of Australia have one useful point in their character which is availed of with great advantage on many occasions; I allude to the wonderful sagacity they exhibit in "tracking," or following, the trail of either animals or human beings. This peculiarity of theirs has over and over again been the means of saving the lives of travellers who have been lost in the bush, or children who have strayed into the forests and been unable to find their way back; and often when the united efforts of a whole village or settlement has been unsuccessful in discovering and relieving the wearied traveller, or the lost darling, the services of the "black tracker" have proved successful. It is wonderful to think how these black fellows can follow the track of the human foot through thick bush,

fallen leaves, and broken branches, where the eye of the white man can distinguish no mark whatsoever; and, more especially, is it wonderful where, even after a whole village has trodden the ground in every direction, the black fellow can, when once put upon the trail, follow without confusion, with all the instinct it would seem of a bloodhound, the track he is first placed on.

Very few of these natives are now to be met with either in Victoria or New South Wales, but farther north towards Rockhampton, in Queensland, they are still pretty numerous; and many of them are employed as mounted police, in which capacity, as may be supposed, they are very useful in discovering the whereabouts of bushrangers and other bad characters.

In case any of my readers may have a confused idea as to what sort of an establishment a "station" is, and care to know, I can only say there are stations and stations; some are indeed very bleak and uncomfortable looking, untidy, and carelessly kept, while others again are exactly the opposite. The "Station of Mannerim," on which I had the pleasure of spending a very happy time, was one of the latter. Imagine, and you have it, a large naturally timbered park of almost limitless extent, with a well-kept carriage drive leading from the high-road, in length about a quarter of a mile, and ending at a pretty but large sized cottage-built residence, "shingle"* roofed, picturesquely placed in the midst of a handsome pleasure-ground, with the most gorgeous flowers of all colours tastily interspersed throughout. Adjoining are a vineyard and garden loaded with luscious grapes, peaches, apricots, and strawberries *ad libitum*. The whole scene teams with animal life; the acacia-trees near the pleasure-ground are literally covered with beautiful crimson-breasted lorys, playfully, and seemingly quite at home, disporting themselves amidst the pale

* Small flat wooden pieces, used instead of slates or tiles.

green foliage, while the blue gum (*Encalyptus globulus*) has been taken possession of by the rosselias, whose green and brown and roseate plumage almost rivals that of its neighbours. Add to this a lovely clear sky, such as is only seen in Australia, or perhaps Italy, a delicious sunshine, and the soft cooing of the bronze-winged pigeon. This was "Mannerim Station." You had only to walk into a very prettily furnished drawing-room to be introduced to the proprietress and her amiable daughter, true specimens of that good old English aristocracy amongst whom hospitality may always be looked for, even after the old acres have passed away, and they have been obliged to seek a home in a new world.

But what kind of place was the cottage may now be asked. I certainly cannot say quite so much for it, nevertheless it was well built, weather boards of course, comfortable, and with plenty of room; then we had lots of firewood close by, and as we had had plenty of experience in preparing our own meals, we did not find much difficulty in getting ready our breakfast, which was the only meal we had to look after, as my companions Chalker and Smikes now dined every day at the station. The shearing had been at last completed. The very last sheep had been dipped and marked, and we were all stretched at full length on some straw in a shed, resting after our fortnight's labours, contemplating the future, and awaiting the postman, for the mail steamer had arrived and our home letters were due. We were all wondering what news we should receive, or more strictly speaking, what remittances we might get, and were describing what we should do if our letters "turned up trumps." We had been working very hard, we thought, for some time, and ought to reward ourselves with a "spree" of some kind, so it was agreed that should any of us receive a "respectable" remittance, he must give a dinner in Geelong to the company. This was duly agreed

upon, and now it only remained to be seen who was to be the lucky victim. Presently the "captain" appeared with a number of letters and newspapers in his hands. "There you are, boys," he said, addressing us, "lots of good news from home. Chalker, Smikes, Daddy" (that was your obedient servant), letters for you all. I was very pleased to receive letters at all times from home, but knew when I might expect my remittance, and I certainly did not this time, so I felt sure that I was out of the "race;" but no sooner had I opened my letter than I discovered my mistake, for there was the enclosure, which I readily recognised as a banker's draft-order. What was the meaning of this? I could not resist looking at the amount before I read further—£200. I could not understand it, so I commenced to read my letter. "All well," —so far so good. "If you have not found some really profitable employment, you had better return and spend a little time here, and try and get something at home; enclosed order for £200 to defray expenses, may require a little over, need not spend it if unnecessary. If you wish to return again can do so." Thus ran my letter; so I could go home if I wished. In a moment the whole scene came before me—meeting all my friends again, seeing my cousins, and a hundred other pleasures and delights. I certainly would go home for a short time, and then come out again and settle permanently down. I would try and arrange enough capital to buy a share in a station, I could easily find a partner. "£200—you may want a little extra." No, I should require little more than my passage-money, and a new suit of clothes, for I did not owe a farthing, and was even a few pounds to the good, but I would be able to give a good "spree," as we called it, to my friends. I had now been nearly four and a half years absent from home; the time had passed quickly enough, and, taking everything into consideration, pleasantly

enough too, though my fortunes had been varied. We had now finished our letters, when the captain, who had been let into our secret, asked us, "Well, which is the victim; do not all speak at once, for I must be included amongst the party?" We did not all speak at once, for on this occasion I had, most unexpectedly as I have said, been the only one who had received anything; so I said that I should be most happy if they would all give *me* the pleasure of their company at dinner at the Hotel Geelong, any day they chose to name, for that I had unexpectedly received news from home which would necessitate my separating from them for a time, and I was about to make a journey of short duration to my native heath.

I now told them all about it; we mutually expressed ourselves sorry to part, but as it was only to be for a short time, for this was sincerely my intention at the time, we soon learned to look at the thing in a quiet sort of way. We had by this time entered the house, where we had been invited to remain for supper, in honour of the close of the season's clip. During supper we discussed the coming dinner, but this was at once ignored by the ladies, who declared that they must be included in the "spree," and that they could not join a dinner at the Geelong Hotel; why not give a picnic, and invite all your friends? You can take us amongst those beautiful lakes where you have been getting the inexhaustible supply of game that you have given us lately, and of which we have heard so much; nothing could be better than a huge *game pie*, if properly made, and if you will undertake to supply the birds and the champagne we will undertake the rest. Here was a challenge. What better or pleasanter "spree" could we have than was contained in this proposition? So it was unanimously resolved that I should give a farewell picnic, to which I would invite all our neighbours and our Queenscliff and Geelong friends. And as I had an-

nounced my intention of leaving by the very first opportunity (for I remembered the banker's advice, "Look about you for a time before you start," and I thought, perhaps, like poor Chalker and Smikes, I might during this operation part with my wherewithal to go), we named four days hence as the date of the picnic. Next day Smikes was dispatched to Queenscliff (for he liked going there), Chalker was sent to Geelong, while I took the home country, to distribute invitations. Everybody promised to come, we met with no refusal. Chalker purchased the very best of champagne and claret for me, and thus far everything promised to make my picnic a success. We selected a lovely spot in a little valley between two lakes, where a gentle sea-breeze could reach us, keep us cool, and drive away the mosquitoes—for there were lots of my old enemies about—and when, the day before the event, we erected our tent, we at the same time brought back with us about twenty brace of snipe for the game pie, and our shooting friends promised to keep an eye on the tent till the morrow.

CHAPTER XXI.

An eventful morning—My guests—A glorious day for the picnic—The game pie—My health proposed—A reply in "suitable terms"—A toast to the ladies—Smikes's celebrated speech—Beautiful woman—The consequences—Smikes tests the accuracy of his statements—The thickest of the bush—A load of responsibility—A dilemma—Safety in a multitude—The fallen gum-tree—Disturbed—The result—"Eloquent and heart-melting language"—My three young ladies—"She paused for a reply"—"In that sightless bush"—"With my own sunburnt hands"—"When my lips were free"—Engaged to another—"I was not in love"—The most heartless flirt in Geelong—The curtain falls—A last glimpse of Australia—"Who is that in the boat?"—The pilot was right—A letter from another quarter—"False one, I love thee still!"—A matter left in obscurity—"Squatters"—Forty thousand pounds—*Via* Cape Horn—Icebergs—A slippery home—In the Thames on the eve of a Derby.

NEXT morning early, the morning of the eventful picnic, we packed up everything and dispatched the articles by cart. Mrs. S—— had sent us quantities of everything good, and no one understood better than she what that meant. Some of the party were to meet us on the ground; but the greater number were to join us at Mannerim, and accompany us. In good time everybody made their appearance, some on horseback, others in "buggies," * and in this order we proceeded to the "Elysian Fields."

There we found everything awaiting us. It was a glorious day, and a most enticing-looking luncheon was already laid out. I placed the young ladies exactly as

* American light carriages.

they wished to be, for I had studied the tastes of all my guests. With the assistance of Chalker, Smikes, and Captain S——, the wants of the party were carefully attended to. When every one appeared to have done ample justice to the game-pie and other good things, the toasting commenced. First of all, as etiquette demanded, my health, coupled with a safe and pleasant voyage, was proposed by Captain S——, to which I replied in suitable terms, alluding to the "kindness and hospitality I had invariably received since my arrival in Victoria, more especially since good fortune had brought me to the neighbourhood of Queenscliff." And dwelling upon the regret I had in leaving Australia, "a country in which I had received such kindness, and from whence such pleasant recollections would always be associated in my mind. But although I was tearing myself away from dear old Queenscliff"—looking very hard in a particular direction as I said this, where several young ladies had congregated—"and would soon be on board a ship which would bear me far away from scenes of endearment, I did not feel so sure of arriving in my own country with all my organs complete, for I greatly feared it would be found upon landing that my heart was left behind." And after again thanking them for the kind manner in which my health had been received, I begged to propose—in flattering terms—"The health of the ladies of Victoria, coupled with the names of Mrs. and Miss S——."

This toast, which was drunk with sincerity, and received with a "Hip, hip, hurrah!" and one cheer more for Mrs. and Miss S—— in particular, was responded to by Smikes, as the youngest bachelor of the party. He said,—

"I feel that I am taking upon myself a great responsibility in rising to return thanks on behalf of the ladies of Victoria for the health which has just been so eloquently

proposed and warmly received by this company; but as I have been already the recipient of many indulgences from the fair sex during my short career, I feel sure my humble endeavours to speak for them on this occasion will be good-naturedly accepted, and my short-comings overlooked. On behalf of the ladies I thank you, gentlemen, for the very hearty manner in which this toast has been responded to. The flattering way in which our host has mentioned the ladies of Victoria has already found an echo in my heart, and I feel that, young as I am, I shall not long be able to remain a bachelor, unless all the ladies in turn, whom I see around me here to-day, have hardened their hearts against me." (No, no. Go on.) Here his eyes rapidly passed round the party; but no doubt somebody noticed where they finally rested. "There are other bachelors amongst us," continued the speaker, "who, I have no doubt, are inclined to follow my example; and if my surmise be correct, I shall only say, in conclusion, that they may go farther and fare worse. I urge you, therefore, my friends, my companions, not to let slip such an opportunity as this pleasant gathering presents for paving that road to perfect happiness which I solemnly believe is only to be found in the society of beautiful women, whose image is so worthily represented here to-day,"—cheers,—amidst which the speaker resumed his seat upon the ground beside, shall I reveal it, her whom he afterwards made his wife.

It was still pretty early in the day, and as we had a great deal to see before returning home, the party already seemed to be acting upon Smikes's advice, and very soon the large gathering had broken up into little parties. Smikes was evidently about to test the accuracy of his statements, and from the direction Chalker was taking, and the determination he appeared to be making for the thickest of the bush, little doubt remained upon my

mind that he would be lost before sunset. What a load of responsibility I had taken upon myself in connection with this picnic! Here were no less than three young ladies all waiting for me, the host, who had boldly stated he was about to leave his heart behind him, and each of the three young ladies felt sure that she was to be the custodian of it (while all this time it was safely in Ireland), and were determined to do their best—for young ladies sometimes have great confidence in themselves—to induce me to remain at Mannerim for the present. What was I to do? If I selected any one of them in particular, it would be almost a declaration on my part. I called upon my guardian angel to assist me in this dilemma, and the reply was, "There is safety in a multitude: go in for the lot." I could not throw away this advice, so in I went for the lot; leading them into the most picturesque part of the bush, when—what? could it be possible?—yes, 'tis true; there was Chalker, his fair friend seated upon a fallen gum-tree, and he—shocking young man!—upon his knees before her! I was sorry to disturb them, but did not discover my intrusion in time; but I am sure I was the means of saving them from being lost in the bush later on, when it might have defied even the sagacity of the black tracker to have discovered their whereabouts, for I was afterwards assured by Chalker that he was endeavouring, from the earnest position in which we had found him, to induce the young lady, in the most eloquent and heart-melting language, "*to bolt with him,*" as he elegantly put it.

My three young ladies felt very mischievously disposed now, and as they could not divide me in parts, they determined to spoil poor Chalker's flirtation, so when I moved on, as of course I did at once, when I saw what I had done, I found two of them had remained behind to guard my friend, and I was thus left alone with one.

Pl VI

How Chalker must have blessed me! I tried to carry on a commonplace conversation, but it was no good. "Oh," she said, "what a charming speech that was you made us, and how you looked! But," continued she, "what fortunate young lady did you allude to, when you hinted that your heart would remain in Geelong? Was it one of your guests?" and here she bent her beautiful blue eyes upon the ground, and paused for a reply. This was too much, this was cruel, this was bringing me to task too severely. All the spirit of fun and mischief which had been accumulating for centuries in my Celtic blood came crowding to my destruction, and I could not for the life of me resist the temptation of replying, "Yes, dearest one, you must have read it in my eyes; it was you, you whose image has haunted me ever since the memorable festivities in honour of the arrival of his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh at Port Philip Heads," and here our fingers became entangled, in "that sightless bush." "Yes," I continued, "I love you, Norah"—for that was her pretty name—"could you have doubted it? Could you have ever managed to get through that generous helping of 'game pie' I placed upon your plate with my own sunburnt hands, without having felt, dearest one, that I had helped you as I loved you?" "Oh, do," she replied, turning upwards her pretty face, and looking in my eyes, at the same time exhibiting the very prettiest row of pearly teeth that ever was seen—which for the life of me I could not resist—"Oh, do!" she said, "repeat those sweet words again, they sound so delicious from you. If my mother could only hear you now!" I assured her that I would that instant fly to her mother, "and tell her all"—"and tell her all," I continued, when my lips were free, "were it not for the fact that I am engaged to another."

But I am getting out of my latitude, and tottering on

the brink of poetry and love, and this will never do; it might be played upon like the strings of the Æolian harp. So, shall I confess? *I was not in love*, but merely acting in a spirit of mischief, for I was left alone, when deserted by the other two, with the most heartless flirt in Geelong, but I think she was caught in her own trap this time.

* * * * * *

Here the scene closes. The curtain falls! I made my farewell bow to all those friends whom I did not again expect to see before leaving, and three days after this I had taken leave of my two faithful companions, and my kind friends of Mannerim Station, and was safe, and "unencumbered," on board the good ship *Sussex*, sailing out of Melbourne Harbour.

Early on the following morning I rose to get a last glimpse of Australia; we were now coming to the Heads, on whose shores I had passed so many pleasant days. We soon passed Mud Island, and Rabbit Island, and King's Island, and all the other islands, which had, upon so many occasions, afforded me such pleasure and amusement. I was now saying farewell to everything, perhaps never more to visit these pleasant scenes again. It was very early, only just daylight, but we were to pass Queenscliff about six A.M. "Who is that in the boat hailing us in front?" asked the captain of the pilot on the bridge. "It is, I think," answered the pilot, whose glasses were directed towards a boat, "some friends of the gentleman by your side, who used to live in 'Rocket's' cottage on shore. I dare say they have come to see the last of their companion."

The pilot was right; they were my old friends Chalker and Smikes come to say good-bye. They had been waiting all night in case the vessel should have made great speed and they might miss her. As we now ap-

proached the boat, the captain had given orders for "a line" to be thrown them; this they secured, and as we proceeded towards the open sea—we were going very slowly at the time—they came with us. They had brought with them two boxes, a present for me, containing very superior wine "from the good-natured grocer's store," and they were commissioned with a little present and a letter from another quarter, all of which were got safely on board. Shortly after this the captain recommended them to "drop the line," as we were now getting outside the Heads, and once more, with many regrets, I again said a fond adieu to my poor old friends.

I had now time to think of making myself comfortable for the voyage; but first of all I would read my letter, and open the little packet. I shall not disclose the contents, as this would not be honourable. Suffice it to say, it was from my blue-eyed friend, whom I had helped so liberally to game pie. It was a long epistle, a synopsis of which would be, "False one, I love thee still."

A voyage from Australia at that time in a sailing vessel was such a very monotonous affair, extending as it did over three months, during which time there is little to be seen and nothing to do, and besides which it has been so often described, that I shall leave the subject of my homeward voyage in obscurity. The ship was very full; we had on board about four hundred passengers, principally second and third class, but we had also a large number in the saloon. For the most part these consisted of sheep "squatters" or cattle farmers, who either had sold their holdings, or were making a trip to the "old country" "to brush themselves up." In order to explain the amount of capital which would be required for the purchase of a station in Victoria at that time, I may mention that I was told by a fellow passenger, who knew some-

thing about every one, that the smallest sum which had been obtained by any of those on board, who had sold out altogether, was forty thousand pounds.

The homeward passage was made by Cape Horn. In this latitude we sailed for several days amongst hundreds of icebergs on their way south. It was a beautiful sight to behold these monster white islands when reflecting the rays of the sun, their ever-varying colours rivalled that of the rainbow, while rivulets of melting ice trickled down their rugged sides; the presence of the Polar bear alone being required to complete the harmony of the scene—the Polar bear carried away from his regions of ice while engaged in his search for (fortune) food, now left to float about upon ever-diminishing territories, daily supplies obtained at the risk of never again being able to reach his slippery home, when necessity obliged him to take a "header" for his dinner. But as there did not appear to be any bears upon these detached islands, and it was uncommonly cold work watching these ever-changing hues, even icebergs grew wearisome, and I was not sorry when we got clear of those latitudes.

Nothing worthy of note occurred after leaving the icebergs, until one day, the eighty-fourth of our passage, the captain announced that we should arrive in the Thames (D.V.) the following evening in time to run down to Epsom next day to see the "Derby."*

* We did actually arrive on the eve of a Derby Day.

CHAPTER XXII.

The good ship *Sussex*—Half a lifetime—"A search for fortune"—"Had I let it ebb?"—The spread-eagle—Welcome—My luggage—Difficulty of finding quarters for the night—The result—Lincoln and Bennett and others—Favourable contrasts—At the Derby—Old friends—"England's getting hanged slow"—"As rich as an old Jew"—Gloomy realities—Euston Station—Arrival of my relatives—"*Caed mille failthè*"—Fairly represented in the service—Despised "loafers"—"Birds of a feather flock together"—Noble relatives and influential friends—Cabinet ministers—Consulships—The result—Fenianism—Stringent measures—Disgraceful scenes—Attempt to blow-up Clerkenwell prison—Revolutionists of the world—The one prize I sought—A mere Will-o'-the-wisp—Dreams—My fair and charming cousin—Tidings—Seeking change—The vision at the open window—The Bath-chair—Tall fine-looking girls—"One is fair, and the other dark"—How very like—"During that minute they had disappeared"—Not of this world—A vision—They are in Dublin—The crossing-sweeper's information—Unsuccessful—Stopped by an acquaintance—But who proved to be a real friend—The result—I had found my prize—Craving the indulgence of my readers.

IT was a glorious afternoon, at the close of May, when the good ship *Sussex* was being towed up "Old Father Thames," with her eager and anxious freight on board. There were amongst the passengers more than one who had been absent from old England half a life-time, and who now that they had been permitted by providence once more to return, actually wept for very joy. I had been absent more than four years and a half—on "A Search for Fortune,"—and was returning no better off than I had started, nor to all appearance had I left brighter prospects behind; but still I had impressed on myself the conviction that Shakespeare was not wrong, when he said

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which if taken at the flood leads on to fortune;" had that tide occurred with me, and had I let it ebb? I recalled all the opportunities which had presented themselves during my travels, and I could not see that I had not taken advantage of everything worth having that had come in my way; then it must be, I argued, that my flood-tide has not yet taken place; I must live in hope, and watch my opportunity; I would not let it ebb, if any effort on my part could prevent it. At length the wished for "stage" was run on board from the dock wall in front of the "Spread Eagle." We were now free to walk on shore in dear old England, where even in this dismal locality of dock-land everything seemed to bid us welcome. I had no gold dust in my portmanteau which I had not declared, so the Custom House officer had no dreads for me; my luggage merely consisted of a portmanteau and a cage containing one solitary occupant, the survivor of a brace of laughing kingfishers—jackasses I was going to say, but it would not be respectful to introduce them to a foreign country under that name—and which I had brought for a young hunting friend of mine, R——. It was after sunset, and the Custom House officials would not pass our luggage at that hour. This was very awkward, for I wanted to go to the Derby in the morning—my family would in all probability not have arrived in London yet, June and July being their months—but the officials were inexorable; however, they told us we could have them at any hour in the morning after eight A.M., and we might now take a few things, such as brush, combs, &c., &c., necessary for the night. With these therefore we had to be satisfied, and we would return in good time in the morning, so that we might not have our "Derby" interfered with. I say we because there were three of us, two acquaintances I had made on board and myself. So after saying good-bye

to the captain and officers, and thanking them for the pleasant and satisfactory voyage we had made, we set off for the West End, where I, who acted as guide—my companions were not acquainted with London—undertook to find quarters for the night, and show them a little about town. The first hotel I went to, in Bury Street, St. James's, the only one I had stopped at in London formerly, where I was likely to be known, had changed hands, and I was assured every spot was full, and that it was not likely I should find rooms, in that quarter, so late at night, it was now nearly nine P.M., and on the eve of the "Derby," and we were advised to try some of the larger hotels. This we proceeded to do, but at every place we went to we were told they were full. At last I discovered the secret: our appearance was against us, and we had no luggage; they were afraid to let us in. We certainly presented anything but the appearance of young men of fashion, unless we represented a fashion of our own, for we were all three attired in "monkey jackets" and wide-awakes.

At length, after great difficulty, we were put up in the less fashionable quarter of Chelsea, whither we were directed by an intelligent cabman; and as the novelty of a walk on terra firma had made us all tired and anxious for a comfortable on-shore bed, we were not very long before "turning-in," and as anything in the shape of a "four-poster" was a change for the better, we slept quite as soundly as if we had wakened up in St. James's or Piccadilly. Next morning we were at the "Docks" early, where we easily got our dispatch. I then parted from my friends, drove to the Euston Hotel, where I wrote some letters to my parents, from whom there had been handed, by the agent upon landing, letters telling me to await their arrival from Ireland at the "Euston," where they would join me in a few days. I was glad they did not say to-

day, as that would have spoiled my Derby. I next called a hansom and drove to Lincoln and Bennett's, where I changed the wideawake for a white Derby hat; I then visited my tailors, J. B. Johnstone and Co., Sackville Street, who, fortunately, by the greatest good luck were able to fit me with a dust coat, which "covered a multitude of sins." I next visited a hosier and a bootmaker in succession, and finally arrived on Epsom Downs in good time for the great race, which I witnessed from the top of an old friend's drag, and where my appearance, taking all into consideration, the good healthy bloom of a three months' voyage included, contrasted favourably with the general company.

I met a great many old friends, for who does not meet old friends at the Derby, whom probably one seldom comes across anywhere else? They had been, they said, wondering where I had hid myself all these years, and what I had been doing; but this story could not be so quickly told, as those who have taken the trouble to follow me thus far will admit, so I merely told them I had been abroad, and had just returned. "Made your fortune, old fellow, I suppose." "Opened a gold mine, or something of that sort." "Come home, no doubt, to get married and settle down." "That's the kind of thing." "Well, never mind, might as well be abroad as in this beastly country." "England's getting hanged slow nowadays." "I have a notion I shall go abroad myself some day, if things go on as they are, and go in for making a pot of money; that's what you want in this country; no use stopping in England without lots of money." "S'pose you are all right in that respect." "That's right; nothing to do but run out to Australia for a few years, and return as rich as an old Jew." Such were the ideas of my friends on the vexed question of emigration. I had myself partly held similar views before I set out, but they had long since been

removed. However, there was no necessity of forcing all my gloomy realities and disappointments upon my lively companions on the Derby night, so I enjoyed myself with the hour, and spent a very pleasant evening.

Two days after this I was standing on the platform of Euston Station awaiting the arrival of the whole of my family—father, mother, brothers and sister—for they were to arrive in a body to welcome the "prodigal's return."

Punctually to its time the train drew up at the platform. I was not long in discovering my relatives. Of course five years had made a great change in my appearance, and also in theirs, but our meeting was very warm, a real "caed mille failthè," more especially on the part of my poor mother. My elder brother had only a few days previously returned from India, on leave of absence from his regiment, the Cameron Highlanders; he was suffering from "liver," and looked very wretched indeed, but I am pleased to say that a few visits afterwards to Sir Ronald Martin, the then eminent physician on these matters, soon restored his health completely, and before the close of the season he was looking as well and as handsome as ever. Another, a younger and very favourite brother, had joined the 97th Regiment since my absence, so that my family were fairly represented in her Majesty's army even in the absence of my services. They did not appear to think I had suffered much by exposure to the "hot winds" of Australia, and I was assured that I was looking as strong and well as I felt.

I enjoyed myself, as was my wont, for the next three months to my heart's content. I did not, however, during this period, entirely forget that I was past the age for living at home on the hospitality of my parents, and my experiences in the colonies had taught me that the only man who is thoroughly despised is the "loafer." It matters little what one's occupation is, so long as one is

helping one's self, nor does it matter after the return to the old country again "how one has made one's fortune." Nobody will ever inquire, so that one has really made it, if you are a gentleman and bear out the appellation.

Nor does it matter abroad, what your occupation may be, if you are quiet and unobtrusive. I have always found that those who are not your equals very soon discover the fact, and treat you with silent respect, no matter what your employment be, without ever attempting intimacy. Of course there are always a whole host of "cads" about in every country and climate, but it is not difficult to steer clear of these, as they readily understand where their vulgarity is appreciated or otherwise, and, like birds of a feather, they flock together.

With the object, therefore, of obtaining some appointment of an aristocratic and substantial description—for I had no idea of putting up with humdrum or inferior employment at home—rather would I return abroad fifty times—I called on my noble relatives and influential friends. A good consulship in a healthy position, or an inspectorship of fisheries, factories, or something of that sort I thought would do, or a Queen's-messengership. I was introduced to some of the cabinet ministers with this object, and always met with attention and courtesy from them, with a similar result on each occasion: my name was entered on a long list with those whose claims were prior and equally influentially introduced, and no prospects were ever held out of immediate, or even moderately distant probability of my obtaining what I sought.

However, I tried, and tried on. I had some hope of securing a consulship, but at the time a Royal Commission was sitting to consider the advisability or otherwise of continuing paid consulships, and I was obliged to await the result of these deliberations before any vacancies would be filled up. In the course of time these deliberations did

come to a conclusion,* and a noble relative of mine enclosed me a letter he had received from a Mr. C——, chairman of the committee, which ran thus :—" Our committee have just concluded their deliberations, and have come to the wise determination, with which I entirely agree, to abolish these paid sinecures, and to appoint in their stead local merchants, who will be glad to perform these duties for the honour of the thing and the position which it will give them, in return for a moiety of the fees. And thus a large saving will be effected in this branch of the public service, and the services of a number of overpaid and often worthless officials will be dispensed with."

Thus my hopes in this direction were blighted. I have since had opportunities of seeing and hearing of the fallacy of this near-sighted policy. A number of local merchants *and others* were appointed to represent her Majesty's government, who in most cases were ignorant of the English language, and when called upon by British subjects, or masters of trading vessels, they would merely reply in a foreign tongue, leaving the inquirer to do the best he could; but this was not all, a moiety of the fees would not suffice these gentlemen, they pocketed everything, often steadfastly refusing to render any accounts at all, so that as soon as a wise Conservative government came into power they were obliged to undo and repair the mischief their predecessors had committed and to reappoint paid officials.

After leaving London, and returning to Ireland, I was obliged to neglect for a time my exertions to obtain a government appointment. I was passed the age for admission to those departments which were open to competition, so there was nothing for it but to wait until I could ascertain the result of having my name down for every office and appointment for which I was eligible. I

* Mr. Gladstone's government.

was glad once more to visit my own country, but grieved to find that it was in the midst of trouble. Fenianism had been growing up and spreading amongst a certain section of the population for some years, and it had now broken out. The rising was at first considered to be small and unimportant. It had its birth, no doubt, in America, where it had been fostered and nursed with great care by a lot of rowdies and outcasts, encouraged in their hot-headed ideas by a number of desperadoes whose occupation had ceased at the termination of the American civil war. Stringent measures were taken by the government, and a large number of military were ordered for service in Ireland, but even an insignificant per centage of these became disaffected. However, large seizures of arms were effected; numbers of the ringleaders were captured, tried, convicted, and banished; the Peace Preservation Act was amended and enforced; the more disturbed and disaffected districts were proclaimed, and comparative order was restored; but not until some very disgraceful scenes had taken place, such as the murder of the policeman at Manchester, and the attempt later on to blow up the Clerkenwell prison, London, in order to facilitate the escape of the Fenian prisoners who were therein confined.

I should be sorry to think that any true-bred Irishman sympathized with these revolutionists, the greater portion of whom were either not of Celtic origin at all, or were merely the dupes of adventurous Americans, or belonged to that band of revolutionists which exist in every country, who are always ready at a moment's notice to hurl vengeance and violence against their best friends in their malignant frenzy, and who, if ever they succeed in establishing any one of their so-called reforms, are as ready the next day to knock it all on the head again.

However, no matter which way my sympathies went, or what my opinions on the subject were, I was not going to

bother myself particularly about these Fenians, whom I clearly could see from the beginning were incapable of doing very serious mischief. After all, what did it matter to me? I was not a landlord or heir to an estate in the country. There was one prize in the whole empire of Great Britain and Ireland which I wished to possess—*and only one*—and having gained this prize and borne it in triumph to a place of safety, I would content myself anywhere. I sought this prize everywhere but without avail. I got tidings of it sometimes, but these tidings always proved to be a mere Will-o'-the-wisp, and I came no nearer the knowledge I sought. I heard, indeed, sad news connected with it; news which, sad of itself, might make it still more difficult for me to gain my prize; yes, it had been deprived of its protector, and it had left the old home and become a wanderer; but still I knew I should discover it some day, and this determination was never shaken. Sometimes I dreamt it was within my grasp, and on these occasions I would actually see it, and oh, how changed it was! but still this change made it dearer to me, for it looked perhaps a little sad, but as charming and beautiful as ever; it looked at me and called me by my name, and said, "If it is you we shall indeed have pleasant old times again." I tried to reply, but at this moment it always vanished, and when awake I would find myself no nearer my prize. I always looked on these dreams as indications and forewarnings, that the time was not far distant when joyful tidings would reach me, and that when this happy hour arrived it would be found that my heart had remained, through all my trials, dangers, difficulties, and flirtations, true to its colours. These dreams had become, of late, more frequent, and I was constantly on the look out, and fully expected to see *my fair and charming cousin*, from whom I had been separated so long. I had discovered, on my arrival in Ireland,

that her father and only brother had died during my absence. We did not correspond while I was abroad, as I had left her a mere growing girl, and somehow my own people forgot to mention the fact. Since the father's death, the mother and two daughters had left the country in which they lived, and taken a house at Bray—a delightful watering place in the picturesque county of Wicklow. To this retreat I had traced them, but they had gone—the poor mother's health had been shattered by constant and continued fretting, and they had sought change and travel. At one time I would hear of them as having set out for the German mineral springs; another time at some seaside place in England—ever seeking change for their poor mother. One lovely August morning, I was sitting in the open window of our house, situated in the outskirts of Dublin, thinking about my cousin, and wondering whether we should ever meet again. I had been watching the approach of a Bath-chair, which was wheeled carefully along the gravel path in front of our house; it was guarded by two tall fine-looking girls, dressed in dark naval blue serge dresses, fitting to the body, as was the fashion of the day, and which displayed figures proportioned with no ordinary favour. Every now and then the elderly lady in the chair would stop to inquire, or to admire something of passing interest, and on these occasions one or both would quickly be at her side. "How attentive," I said to myself, "they seem to be to their mother!" for instinct told me it could be no other than their mother. "What fine looking-girls they are," I thought, as they approached nearer; "and how aristocratic their bearing! I never saw girls walk so well in my life. I am sure if I could only see my lost cousins that is just what I should find them grown into; one is fair and the other dark too. How very like! Could it be possible that I had discovered my prize?" Yes, I felt sure of it now.

PWB

To rush down-stairs, snatch my hat from the stand, was but the work of a moment—*but, during that moment they had disappeared.* What could have become of them? They were going straight onward, apparently with determination; could they live next door, or be staying there? for there were no houses opposite. I first rushed onward in all haste, but there was no sign of them. I made up my mind they had either crossed over and gone next door, or, Bath-chair and all, must have sunk into the earth; that was it there was no doubt. Such charming creatures were not of this world. This then was the interpretation of all my dreams lately. I was to sit in an open window, in the capital of my native land, and there, as a recompense for all hardships in the antipodes, I was to be rewarded with one view, just one little sight of two of the most lovely of womankind. Of course, in order that this should be so, they were to be represented as like what my two cousins in all probability had grown into as possible, and then the vision was to vanish from my view. But still I could not quite reconcile my superstition with what I now felt convinced was reality, so I just re-crossed over the way, knocked at the door, and demanded from the servant whether Mrs. W—— was staying there. To which the servant promptly replied, "No, sir, this house belongs to ——, and I know no one of that name." My heart was now beginning for the first time to fail me, but still, I argued, I have discovered one thing, *they are in Dublin.* I was now about to return to my own house, when I noticed the little crossing-sweeper over the way looking very hard at me; he had evidently been watching all my movements, I would just ask him whether he had seen a lady in a Bath-chair, accompanted by two char——, I was going to say charming young ladies, but I recollected I was addressing a crossing-sweeper. I beckoned to him to come near, and upon his approach I demanded of him,

"Did you see, my good boy, a lady in a Bath-chair, accompanied by two younger ladies, pass this way about twenty minutes ago?" "Well, yer honour," replied the boy, "I can't exactly say I saw a lady in a Bath-chair pass this way nor the two tall young ladies, but I seed them come this far, and then they wheeled right round and went back again." "Thank you," I said, handing him a shilling for his information, and away I went. I am sure I walked several miles that evening before giving up the search, which at length I was obliged to do, having been unsuccessful.

Several days passed after this without my catching another glimpse of the Bath-chair and the two fair attendants, although I was constantly upon the watch; and I am sure the people in the houses about must have thought me very rude, for I stared in every window as I passed in hopes that by this means I might chance to discover their dwelling place—besides which, I "tipped" the postmen in the district with the same object, but every effort proved fruitless.

At length one day, walking down M—— Street, I was stopped by an acquaintance—it was unusual for my friend to stop me in the street, and I suspected there was "something in the wind"—"By-the-bye," he said, "how strange meeting you! I have just been paying a visit to some cousins of yours, and they were asking if I had seen or heard anything of you these many years past,"—he was continuing, but I interrupted him—"Who—what—who—whom do you allude to?" I demanded, the whole truth flashing upon me in an instant. "Your cousins, the "W——'s," he replied; "they are stopping in No. — in this street." I waited for nothing more; but I ever after felt grateful to my friend, for he was no longer an acquaintance, but a real friend. "Good-bye," I said hurriedly, "I hope to see you again soon." Being almost

opposite the house, I was soon summoning the servant to the door. "Does Mrs. W—— live here?" "Yes, sir." "Is she at home?" "Yes, sir," "and the young ladies?" "Yes, sir." The servant seemed alarmed at the vehemence of my manner, but I followed her up-stairs, and into a room where I found myself in the presence of the dear old lady of the Bath-chair, and her two lovely attendants. *I had found my prize.*

* * * * *

And I crave the indulgence of my readers to leave us together undisturbed for a little.

CHAPTER XXIII.

An affectionate meeting—Pretty and enjoyable walks—At your service—Don't be stupid—The banks of the Dodder—Compound interest—"For your own ear alone"—Otterdam, or damn the otter—The story as I heard it—My story—*Sans souci*—A gentle reminder—Other pleasant walks—A.—"I love you"—"All cousins love each other, do they not?"—"Don't talk nonsense!"—Trouble at home—My father's illness—Determination again to go abroad—The Fenian riots at an end—Disestablishment of the Irish Church—A bid for the Irish vote—An embodiment of the true principles of the Reformation—Home Rule, or R'home Rule—Coercion—The secret divulged—The letter from South America—Partnership—Making money—Death of my father—"Go and search for fortune"—"You will find me unchanged"—Chalker's letter—What became of Smikes—The odd £1—Death of Chalker—My friend M.—"Skedaddled"—Off to Rosario—Sad enough—The girl I left behind me.

A LONG and affectionate meeting took place; we each had a great deal to tell and to say, and a long account to give of all the events that had occurred since we last met. Great changes indeed had taken place; sad changes of kind faces removed, not again to be looked on in this world. I left, promising to return next day,—"Mind," said my jolly cousins when I was leaving, "we will expect you, now that we have found you, to take us for long walks every day; there are such pretty ones about to which we must introduce you, you will be sure to enjoy them." I replied gaily, I thought that was particularly likely, and gladly promised to be at their service any day, and every day, when and as often as they chose to put up with me. The following day I called early and found them preparing to go out. "Look here," said my

favourite cousin, "H—— and mamma are going together, and they say I am to take you for a walk, but I am sure you would rather accompany them." "Come along," I replied, "come along, and don't be stupid. You know I am dying to walk with you; but where shall we go? which of all those pretty places you have told me of, shall we try this morning?" "Well, I think, if you do not mind, we will stroll upon the banks of the Dodder; it is such a pretty river, and a favourite walk of mine, and I will show you such a funny old house, where once upon a time there dwelt an eccentric old gentleman—but I will not tell you the story until you have seen the place."

Of course I agreed to all her suggestions, my heart was full to overflowing, and I would have followed her to the end of the world had it been necessary; for I felt already that my old love had returned with compound interest added during my absence. "She had such a lot to tell me, we would have to take long walks every day, for an age, if I wished to hear all." "I did," I told her, "wish to hear all, and perhaps I should have something to tell her before long." "What can you possibly have to tell me," she inquired, "which you cannot tell me now?" "Oh, something very particular," I replied, "and I really cannot tell you now—something for your own ear alone." By this time we had arrived at the eccentric gentleman's house which she had promised to point out and tell me all about, and this drew her attention for the moment from the topic of our conversation. "There," she said, pointing to the pillar at the entrance, "read the name, read it aloud." "O-t-t-e-r-d-a-m, Otterdam," I said. "Well, now look that way, and read the name on the pillar at the next entrance." There were two entrances close to each other, as is often the case with suburban cottages. "D-a-m-t-h-e-O-t-t-e-r—Dam the Otter. I beg pardon, it can't be—Dam-the-Otter it is indeed."

"Oh, you ought to be ashamed of yourself for using such language; but never mind, I won't bully you, it is quite right. Now for the story; would you like to hear it?" I told her, "I should very much, as I could not imagine what it meant." "Well," she proceeded, "there lived in that cottage an eccentric old gentleman who was a great poultry fancier; he was always getting home some wonderful breed of ducks, Dorkings, Brahmapootras, or one rarity or another, and as quickly as they arrived so surely would their numbers decrease. The river was full of otters, and they managed to get at his fowl and destroy them. Do what he would he could not stop it; traps were set, and dogs employed to hunt them, but so numerous were they, that although quantities were destroyed, the same nightly depredations were committed in the fowl-house. The name of the place at this time was simply 'Otterdam,' but so enraged became the old gentleman, that one day, having suffered the previous night a serious loss, he sent for a painter and desired him to paint on the pillar at one of the entrances 'Dam the Otter,' which has remained to this day as you see it. 'Otterdam,' said he, 'no such thing; it shall be Dam the Otter as well,' and from that day forth the old gentleman gave up all interest in his feathered pets." "A very good story indeed, and very well told; thank you very much. Apropos of it reminds me of a story I read a short time ago of a rich city merchant, who built a magnificent villa in the suburbs, which he called 'Sans Souci.' There the merchant and his family retired from the wear and tear of business life, for he had accumulated a vast fortune. The villa was the envy of all neighbours, so beautifully and tastefully were the grounds laid out; but there was one drawback, in front was a most inferior cottage residence, the fee-simple property of a poor and jealous trader. This cottage was a source of the greatest annoyance to the wealthy mer-

chant who offered large sums for it, in order to remove the eyesore, and secure an uninterrupted view in front. But no, the jealous trader was not to be bribed; and determined not to be altogether outdone, he tidied up his little cottage, and imitating the pretensions of his richer neighbour he caused to be inscribed upon his gate, 'Sans Six Sous.'"

"Capital!" remarked my cousin. "What a stupid old man the trader must have been to refuse all the money he was offered for his dilapidated old cottage, he might have built himself a beautiful new house, but no doubt he was attached to the old place."

In this manner, chatting gaily and telling stories, we had proceeded some distance, when the striking of a clock reminded us that if we did not wish to alarm mamma, we had better return at once.

We had a great many other pleasant walks afterwards, extending all round the neighbourhood, sometimes accompanied by my other cousin, sometimes by Mrs. W—— and both cousins, but more often alone. I think the "Dodder" was always our favourite walk. One day, many weeks after the story of the otters, we were again walking along the Dodder, when I addressed my fair cousin thus: "Some time ago, when we took our first walk on the banks of this river, I told you I should have something to say before long, and you urged me to tell you then, but I would not; will you hear me now?" She made no reply, but I knew I might. "A——, I love you! That is what I had to tell you," "Is that all?" said she, starting up. "Why of course you love me, and I love you; all cousins love each other, do they not? You quite frightened me, you looked so serious; I thought you were going to tell me something dreadful, and you have told me nothing I did not know before, so come along now, and don't talk nonsense, or try to alarm me any more."

We were in great trouble at home now; my father had returned from visiting his properties in the country, where he had been seized with what appeared at first to be only a trifling illness, but on his return home he became much worse, and required the constant attendance of a physician. He had always been a very healthy man, taking a great deal of out-door exercise. He was fond of horses, and had been a great huntsman in his younger days; taking this into consideration, it appeared very curious that no improvement seemed to take place in the slight gastric attack, which his doctor pronounced him to be suffering under. He was confined to his bed now for many weeks, during which time I was his constant attendant. Change of air was recommended to the seaside, and a house was engaged at W——; but after being there for some time, although he occasionally rallied, he appeared to be losing strength every day.

He grew very tired of W—— after a time, and longed for change, so of course his wishes were complied with, and a house was secured at Kingstown. After being there some little time the doctor pronounced him better, and he was able to get about a little in the fresh air. Kingstown was a much more lively place than the neighbourhood we had just left; it was the summer season, and numbers of visitors were stopping there, amongst them my cousins. There would be no London for us this year—but I was rather glad of it, for private reasons, and I was very anxious that my poor father should get better. He had now given up all hope of being able to procure anything for me at home, and it was decided between us that I should go abroad again, and a friend of ours who had a son in South America, had recommended that country, and had undertaken to write and make inquiries from him as to how I could best employ a small capital. It was now necessary to await his reply before finally deciding. I had

long since made up my mind that there was no use returning to Australia without such a sum of money—if I wished to go in for sheep or cattle—as would, in my opinion, represent a fair fortune at home.

Although the Fenian "riots" had disappeared from the country, and comparative quiet had been re-established, fresh excitement had arisen. For some time past the Church Establishment had been threatened by a Liberal Government, and a bill for the purpose was about to be introduced during the ensuing session of Parliament by Mr. Gladstone. Of course all the better class of Irishmen were strongly opposed to such spoliation and robbery as was proposed by this bill for the disestablishment and disendowment of their Church, but their opinion was not asked; the Liberal Government cared little, and thought less, of the gentry's opinion. Meetings were held in every town throughout the country, where the measure was denounced in the most unmistakable language by the real proprietors of the country; but the Government closed their ears to them all. What did Mr. Gladstone or his Government care about Ireland so long as they could command the Irish vote in the House of Commons? And this they were sure to do by striking a blow at the root of Protestantism, and gaining thus the good wishes of the Ultramontane party; for Ireland has always been represented by the very scum of the country, when any inducement of this kind is held out to them, for of course few members would be returned at the elections who did not pledge themselves for disestablishment.

Thus the Church of England which had been established for so many years in Ireland was undone; but the result has not proved to be so disastrous in its effects as we supposed at first must be the case, and the Ultramontane party have been entirely disappointed. A Church has since sprung up in Ireland supported by the Protestant

people, unsullied by ritualism, which ought to make many a church and parson on the other side of the Channel blush, and which can now be held up for an example to the rest of the world, *as an embodiment of the true principles of the Reformation.*

But what have the Ultramontane party done, finding themselves disappointed in this day-dream of disestablishment? They have since raised a cry of *Home Rule*, otherwise *R'home Rule.* They have elected rabble representatives to aid them in carrying out their programme, who have by such discreditable means of obstruction as occurred during the session of 1877, endeavoured to coerce a British parliament into listening for hours in all probability to unparliamentary rambling statements.

I do not think there is much likelihood of a British parliament being coerced, for it is too well-known now what Home Rule really means. It pretends to have in view the better government of Ireland, but its real object is to get power to enact laws which will virtually exclude the Protestants from all benefits, and thus force them ultimately to leave the country.

Were the whole country of one religion, living together in harmony and good-will, and were Home Rule moved for by the "nation united," no doubt every consideration would be given to the wishes of the people, but until this is the case, there would be no safety for either life or property beyond a certain pale, under such a system.

My poor father, who was much interested in all these matters, and had the advancement of his country warmly at heart, did not make much progress towards recovery. A reply had been received by the lady from her son in South America—he had written at once on receipt of her letter, and had strongly recommended me to join him in business in Rosario, a city in the Argentine Republic. He said he was getting on splendidly as the proprietor of a

"Caballeriza"* and "Quinta,"† and required somebody like me, who had some experience in roughing it, to join him, as he had more than he could attend to, and that the small capital which had been mentioned would be ample to put in the business, which required more good management than capital; but if I made up my mind to join him I should come out at once, and instead of bringing everything in gold it would be better to bring some things valuable in the business, such as carriages, dog-carts, double and single harness, saddlery, good hunting-saddles especially.

I was very much pleased at the prospects he described, for he said he was making plenty of money and hoped in a few years to be able to retire on a competency, an equal prospect of which lay before me. After consultation with my father it was agreed that I should set out as soon as he was sufficiently recovered to attend to my affairs. He would, he said, select the carriages himself, as he had some experience. The requisite capital he promised to let me have, and everything was arranged for my departure at an early date. But before my poor father was able to carry out his projects he had a relapse, and in a few days all was over.

* * * *

My poor father had now been dead about six weeks and I had made all arrangements for my departure for Rosario at an early date; I had purchased all the articles my future partner had recommended, and I had completed all legal business with regard to the small inheritance I had succeeded to as a younger son. I had seen a great deal of my cousins, and so bright did my prospects appear to both of us, that instead of being in grief at the near approach of our separation, we looked upon my departure at an early date as the best means of insuring a speedy return. "*Go search for fortune and come back soon again—you will*

* Livery stable. † Suburban farm.

find me unchanged." Years have since rolled by and I have learned to know the sincerity of these words, and to appreciate the fondness of a true heart.

A day or two before my departure I received a letter from my old friend Chalker from Geelong. "Everything has gone wrong," he said. "We have left Mannerim Station and are now staying here, near where Smikes is going to invest the miserable remains of his inheritance—for the kind-hearted grocer, who gave him all he asked, for a mere stroke of his pen, has left him, and consequently me also, ruined men." It seems that Smikes was induced to sign a document, when he went to Melbourne to raise the money to pay off the Scotch steward, and this document had the effect of giving the grocer the handling of every shilling of Smikes's money as soon as it arrived in the country, and so cleverly did the grocer arrange matters, that the very day it arrived, before Smikes himself knew of it, the good man had presented his order, duly signed by Smikes, to the banker who had been deputed to receive it. The banker had no other alternative but to pay over the amount. Fortunately for Smikes, the whole amount had not all been sent by this mail, and he was thus eventually able to get something, but I believe out of upwards of £3,000, the grocer only handed him in change about £800. Smikes declared he had never signed half the papers which were shown him, but there was his signature indisputably attached. The fact was the grocer made him taste all the wines which he supplied to such effect, that he had signed any papers given him, and knew nothing about it afterwards; but I presume he has since learned that things which are obtained by "a mere stroke of the pen" are eventually very expensive. He was a good-natured, kind-hearted fellow, and I was very sorry for him.

Seven hundred and ninety-nine pounds was invested

I believe in a farm shortly afterwards, and the odd £1 in the purchase of a "ring," with which he carried out the programme which he announced in his memorable speech at my farewell picnic. I believe also the farm was a failure; but I have lately heard that the young gentleman and his numerous family are doing a thriving business in Melbourne, and if ever these pages should be scanned by him, I trust he will accept my best and heartiest wishes for his success in every path of life, with kindest remembrances to Mrs. Smikes.

Poor Chalker returned to England during my absence in South America, and I only became acquainted with this fact from a paragraph I read in the *Times* announcing his death. I wrote a letter of condolence to his mother, expressing my sympathy in her affliction, and how grieved I was to learn the death of so dear and valued a friend, the prospect of meeting whom at home I had long cherished. I received a very kind letter in return, telling me of his return to this country about a year previously, with health shattered. He had obtained a small appointment in Liverpool, and at the time of his death was just about to be promoted to something more suitable to his position and deserts.

My friend M——, I have ascertained, remained in Melbourne until he had enjoyed himself to his heart's content, and spent the greater part of the fortune he had "just come into." The balance, which he afterwards returned to New Zealand to look after, he had entrusted to a solicitor, in good practice in Auckland, to invest for him, and this worthy taking advantage of poor M—— and other trusting clients, had "skedaddled," to use an American expression, taking with him all their money. Whether M—— ever recovered anything or even discovered the delinquent, history does not say.

The time had now arrived for my departure, and I

found myself in the office of the agents for my steamer, in Liverpool, full of bills of lading for the valuable cargo I had on board, sad enough, no doubt, to think that, for a long time to come at least, I should have "no more pleasant walks on the beautiful banks of the Dodder," with "the girl I left behind me."

CHAPTER XXIV.

The outward voyage—The *Galileo*—Lisbon—By mutual consent—*The Buenos Ayres Standard*—Tea, tea, tea—A slight difference—Crossing the Atlantic—The Bay of Rio de Janeiro—The Botanical Gardens—Botofogo—The avenue of palms—The market-place—The aquatic *fauna*—Oysters—Crustacea—Birds and monkeys—The River Plate—Landing—A simple and inexpensive dock for Buenos Ayres—Horse-shoe docks—Bound for Rosario—A stroll through Buenos Ayres—The *Lujan*—Captain Davis—A "shake-down" on the supper-table—Morning ablutions—Rosario in sight.

THE *Galileo*, for that was the name of the steamer in which I was destined to cross the Atlantic, was a powerful steamship belonging to Messrs. Lamport and Holt. I had not yet ascertained what my fellow-passengers were like, as the weather had been very rough since leaving Liverpool, and most of them were afraid to trust themselves as far as the "saloon;" and as this weather had accompanied us to the Bay of Biscay, there was little probability of the entire party assembling on deck for the present.

After leaving Lisbon, however, where we put in to replenish our "coal bunkers," the weather cleared up, and by mutual consent a general parade seemed to take place. We did not muster very strong, but still, considering the passenger accommodation on board, we were quite enough. Most of them had been to South America before, and were returning to their homes, and I had already got a great deal of information from those I had talked to, on

matters which had puzzled me very much; for I had not met before leaving any one who had travelled in that part of South America for which I was bound. The only information I had been able to glean had been derived from *The Buenos Ayres Standard*, a daily paper published in the capital of the Argentine Republic. Certainly some of the advertisements I had read in that paper had led me to think that articles of luxury at least, were marvellously expensive, and it appeared to me that for ordinary folk at least such things were not to be thought of. I had read my paper with interest, but when I came upon an advertisement emanating from an enterprising grocer headed "Tea, Tea, Tea, cheapest in Buenos Ayres, only 30 dollars per lb." and explained to my poor mother that I had always understood a dollar to be 4s. 2d. she gravely remarked that I had better take a few pounds with me, for she much feared my means would hardly admit of my indulging in tea for breakfast, after my own supply should cease. Clothes, too, seemed to be offered at prohibitory prices, one hundred dollars being the advertised price for a pair of trousers.

I now ascertained that a paper dollar represented twopence, and thus my mistake; the original paper dollar, it was explained, actually did represent 4s. 2d., but this value had been gradually diminishing, and only the twopence now remained; there were hard dollars, however, my informant told me, silver coins, which were worth 4s. 2d., but the principal money in daily use was paper. So it appeared, after all, it was just as well I had not filled my portmanteau with tea and trousers, as these luxuries would be within my means.

I studied Spanish every day for some hours, as I understood that even a slight knowledge of that language would be of great use to me on landing. We were now nearing Rio de Janeiro; the weather had been oppressively warm

since leaving St. Vincent, where we had "coaled," but now a slight land breeze had cooled the air. I was very anxious to see the beautiful harbour of Rio, in praise of which I had heard so much, and thus be enabled to judge for myself between the bays of Rio and Port Jackson. We were to remain a whole day and night in harbour, and this would give an opportunity for going on shore.

The captain timed the steamer to arrive in Rio at daylight, *i.e.* he regulated the speed of the vessel so that it should be so. We were all astir early on the eventful morning, for a great thing was to see the entrance, and certainly it was a grand sight. Before us lay a huge inland lake, surrounded by towering mountains, reflecting their dark shadows on the tranquil waters; the Organ Mountains in front, the rugged and irregular spires of which half hidden in the clouds, seemed to rise as it were out of the very sea. On the left, the beautiful suburbs of Rio spread along the shores at the foot of mountains, clothed to the very summit in the most gorgeous livery nature could provide; while right and left, picturesque inlets, fringed with the very whitest of silver sands, were exposed to our view, as we quietly steamed towards our moorings. Without doubt the splendid granite-bound harbour was a picture hardly to be done justice to by an artist. As we now approached our anchorage, the beautiful island of Governador and its innumerable satellites stood before us; this was enough to decide me, if I ever could have had any doubt, which was the more beautiful of the two celebrated bays. My mind was made up that nothing I had ever seen, admitting of no exception, could "hold a candle"—if I may be permitted the expression—to the Bay of Rio de Janeiro. I have since had the pleasure of living for some time within full view of this beautiful picture, and of exploring the whole of the mountains which surround it, and forming a close acquaintance

with the material of nature's livery, and am more impressed than ever with the equity of my verdict.

On shore we found everything as beautiful, if not more so outside the town, as it had appeared from the Bay, and a very pleasant day was spent at the Botanical Gardens, which are situated some four miles outside the town. The road leading to them passes through the beautiful suburb of Botofogo, along which one of the most comfortable, prosperous, and best regulated tramways in the world takes its course, putting down the visitor at the entrance to the gardens.

The gardens are very attractive; the avenue of palms at either side of the broad pathway in front of the entrance, extending the entire length of the gardens, is unsurpassed almost by anything similar in the universe. The great height and regularity of these gigantic palms is a marvel of the productiveness of the soil. In every other respect nature has been equally bountiful, and it is to this, more than to the work of man, that these beautiful and interesting gardens owe so much of the admiration that is bestowed upon them by admiring hosts of travellers.

The market-place was the next visited. Here the quantities of delicious-looking fruits of endless variety, and bountiful supply of vegetables, were a sufficient proof of the attention paid to this very necessary branch of industry in a tropical climate; while the aquatic fauna was represented in a special department, by very many varieties of the finny tribe, from the size of a minnow to great fish weighing nearly a hundred pounds, which were cut with saws into convenient sizes. Several varieties of the oyster were also offered for sale, and from the quantities of these excellent little shell-fish, which we saw on this occasion, I concluded that the beautiful harbour must be the emporium of vast hosts. The crustacea was also evidently prolific, and the celebrated prawns (*cameræes*) which we

afterwards had an opportunity of testing at luncheon, certainly bore out the character for delicacy of flavour of which we had been told.

Several bird fanciers had shops in the market, where beautifully plumaged birds and curious little marmoset monkeys* from all parts of the country, might be obtained. Conspicuous amongst the birds were the Toucans (*Ramphastos carinatus* and *R. toco*) the immense beaks of which are so remarkable, and the scarlet ibis (*Ibis rubra*). Nothing can be more intense in colour than this bird, when its plumage is developed under the hot sun of Brazil; in Europe, however, it seldom reproduces this gorgeous livery.

I was quite sorry when the time arrived for leaving Rio. The short stay we had made merely gave us time to learn that, as regards scenery and objects of interest, we had merely had an opportunity of making a commencement; and I trusted that at some future period I might be enabled to spend some time in the beautiful country at which we had just glanced.

The rest of our voyage was soon completed; Monte Video was touched at for a moment to land passengers, and next morning we were at anchor in the outer roads of the River Plate, off Buenos Ayres, ten miles from the shore.

In order to land the passengers and their luggage, lighters came alongside the steamer, but owing to the shallowness of the water, the last two miles were performed by carts, which came from shore to meet the boats, and into which the passengers and luggage were transferred; the horses which performed this wonderful aquatic feat had little more than their heads above water. Fortunately the

* (*Hapale Iacchus.*) These elegant little monkeys are found in great abundance in the hotter parts of Brazil, where they run about the trees like squirrels, which indeed they somewhat resemble in appearance. They feed on insects and fruits, and also, it is said, on small birds and their eggs. They are easily tamed, and often become great pets.

ground is hard, being for the most part formed of "Tosca," a kind of hard petrified bony substance, which is prevalent in the River Plate. A journey by cart and horses at sea is decidedly a novelty, and not one taken to with much confidence by nervous ladies; however, few accidents have been known to occur. What a pity it seems to be that the city of Buenos Ayres, the capital of one of the most thriving republics of South America, should be so badly off for docks; it now costs almost as much, and in some cases more, than the freight from Liverpool or Antwerp, to get goods to the Custom-house from the roads. This is a subject which has claimed the attention of the Republic on many occasions, and if I am rightly informed, either one or two, or all the national loans, have been launched with this desirable end set forth prominently amongst the contemplated improvements. I have seen some of the schemes which have been presented for the consideration of the Congress; some of them, doubtless, are meritorious, more especially that of Mr. Bateman, C.E., but they are all too expensive, and what may be described as contractors' schemes.

A simple and inexpensive scheme, and one which would fully meet the requirements of the country in every respect, would be the construction of a viaduct for a double line of railway to the inner roads, and at the termination of it—*i.e.* at the margin of the deep anchorage—a large horse-shoe dock of concrete blocks, of sufficient dimensions to hold the requisite amount of shipping, with every appliance for loading and unloading at the dock walls, and all the latest improvements for anchorage, sufficient to hold the largest vessels against the Pampero winds, the bend of the horse-shoe-shaped dock serving as the greater protection in this direction.

A very great deal of the shipping at present enters the inner roads; in fact, as a rule ships with suitable draft

of water for this purpose are selected by freighters, and it would not be difficult or expensive to connect these roads by a canal or channel, extending from the mouth of the docks, prepared at the inner roads, by which this shipping could enter. Thus this scheme, which I have estimated could be satisfactorily carried out for about *one million sterling*, could be made decidedly remunerative, and ought to be undertaken by the residents and merchants themselves, for whom it would form a safe and valuable investment.

I have not overlooked the importance of bringing the larger shipping within the same distance, and this I would propose to accomplish by cutting another channel from the outer roads towards the mail steamer anchorage. This channel need not be very broad or deep, for once the waters of the inner and outer roads had a continuous stream prepared in this way, they would soon cut a broad and deep channel for themselves, which would always be kept open by the waters of the Parana, whose course would then be unimpeded in this direction, and thus all shipping could be accommodated to the new docks; this additional expense and outlay either to be borne by the proprietors of the company or by the government as shareholders. I have never been bold enough to suggest these views to those in authority, and merely record them here, *en passant*, as a matter which attracted my attention for the moment; but I have based my calculations as to the cost upon reliable data. Perhaps my remarks may attract the attention of the worthy proprietor of the *Buenos Ayres Standard*, Mr. Mulhall, who is ever eager to serve his adopted country, and he may furnish statistics in his valuable paper showing the profitable results which would be attendant upon such an undertaking as I have pictured. At the time these suggestions occurred to me I had an Admiralty chart and other data before me, but as I write

these particulars have escaped my memory; I have not, therefore, mentioned either distances or soundings, which, however, I remember were all favourable to the scheme.

But I am getting out of my latitude a little. I am bound for Rosario de Santa Fè, and examining the harbour of Buenos Ayres is not likely to further this object. Very little trouble was given by the Custom-house officers —at least, so far as regards myself. I had accompanied an acquaintance made on board who was to pass through Rosario on his way to the Northern Camps, where he (M——) was a well-known *estanciero*, and he knew my future partner very well, and had promised to introduce me.

We would just have time to take a hurried stroll through the city before joining the little river steamer *Lujan*, at the "Tigre," a branch of the Parana, where the steamer met the train from Buenos Ayres in order to embark passengers.

I was very pleased indeed with what I saw of Buenos Ayres, and favourably impressed with those I had met; but as I shall have another opportunity of mentioning this city later on, when my ideas of the country are more matured, I shall at present get on board the *Lujan*, Captain Davis, and start for Rosario. The current was very strong in this tributary of the river, and we had some little difficulty in getting into the broad expansive waters of the Parana; but once there the powerful little steamer battled away bravely against all obstacles. The difficulty was to get berths for all the passengers. This was found to be impossible, and "shake-downs" were prepared in every available corner. I got a "shake-down" on one of the supper-tables, but it little mattered to me where I slept that night, for I was very tired, and notwithstanding the hosts of mosquitoes which had taken passage with us, I slept like a top till daylight next

morning. When I got up and shook myself and sought for a refreshing wash, here was a difficulty. I asked the steward, in the best Spanish I could muster from my conversation-book, whether he could provide me with a basin, towel, and soap, but he merely grinned. I afterwards learned that such luxuries were not commonly used by the natives on these occasions, but that the obliging commander, Captain Davis, always accommodated English passengers in his own sanctum-sanctorum washing-room.

Having performed my ablutions I returned on deck to watch the landscape on either side. It was no easy matter to get a view from side to side of the river, so many islands intervened; but every now and then indistinct views could be obtained. But what was much more interesting to me was to watch the innumerable herds of cattle, sheep, and horses as they lay scattered for miles and miles on the left bank of the river over the apparently limitless, treeless pampas, and I longed for the time when I should be able to make excursions over these wonderful prairies.

In this way the time rapidly passed by, and Rosario was reached early in the afternoon.

CHAPTER XXV.

Rosario—Cartmen and carts of novel appearance—Luggage—Custom-house officials—My future partner—A hearty welcome—A serious accident—My room—Two pretty girls—Mariana—Special duty—A very little towel—Making cigarettes—Attracting attention—Taking things as I found them—My first matè—My fair attendant flies from my presence—Was this a national custom?—Enter the whole family—*Adios*—Exploring the town—Similarity of streets and buildings—The result—*Adonde esta calle Libertad?—No intiendo, señor*—In front of a casino—The interview—Doubtless a countryman—My friend's house again—The consultation—Tom O'Shaughnessy—A free rover of the Camps—An invitation—"Fun and sport"—"The best place to dine in Rosario"—What took place at the dinner—And after the dinner—Giving him the slip—Dragged through the streets—The little tradesman still holds on—Disappearance of Tom O'Shaughnessy—His reappearance—The little spalpeen—A bad lot.

VERY little could be seen of the city of Rosario from the river, as the banks upon which it is built are of considerable height. A few straggling houses on the beach, one or two wooden structures built upon piles, and a long, low, flat-roofed poor-looking building, which I was informed was the Custom-house, comprised all that could be seen of the capital of Santa Fè and the second city of the Republic as we approached our anchorage, but I was informed that a town of some pretensions would be found on the flats overhead.

A great many carriages and carts had come to meet the steamer, and my friend M—— had informed me that these cartmen would charge me some extravagantly exorbitant price if I did not make a bargain with them, and this disagreeable duty he undertook to do for me.

These carts presented a very novel appearance. The drivers were mounted upon the backs of their horses, which were harnessed to a stout pole which passed under the body of the cart, protruding in front like the pole of an ordinary carriage; the horse being saddled with a *recado*, or native saddle-gear, covered with sheep skins, over which is a *sirsingle* or *cinchon*, with a small iron ring, to which the pole is attached. It is wonderful what loads these little horses can drag harnessed in this way, while if worked from the collar they are comparatively unfitted for large loads.

A bargain was quickly made, for these wily cartmen knew at once, when my friend spoke in their own language, that it was not the first time he had had dealings with them. Our luggage was soon got on shore and examined, that is to say our personal luggage, for the officials at once took possession of my larger packages, containing merchandise, in order to impress me I supposed with the importance of the place. Next day I found it had been left outside the Custom-house door, where my cartman had placed it the evening before, while the same lazy-looking official who had refused to examine it, seemed to be still contemplating the manufacture of a cigarette, the end of which he was endeavouring to turn inwards by the use of his "talons."

My future partner's stables were soon found. They certainly did not impress me very much at first sight, and there did not appear to be very many horses occupying the stalls. However, I thought this might be accounted for by the fineness of the day, as it was likely enough many persons had taken advantage of the opportunity to "passear."

The proprietor was not there—he was at home. He had not been very well for the last few days; his house was in the next street and we soon reached it. Here I parted

from my friend and entered. I was handed into a bedroom, where I was introduced to my poor friend McC——. He was looking very ill, but he made every exertion to assure me of a hearty welcome. He explained that he had intended meeting me in Buenos Ayres, whither he had set out on horseback overland, with the intention of buying horses on the way, which he would on his return home with me bring to Rosario. He had taken his foreman and another with him, but unfortunately he had met with an accident, his horse having fallen and crushed him, which had brought on a slight fever, from the effects of which he was then suffering. His foreman and assistant had, however, continued the journey from the place where he had parted from them, about sixteen leagues from town, and he was quite surprised to hear that I had missed them.

A room had been prepared for my reception. To this room I now retired in order to arrange my things and change my clothes, in which I had slept the night before. I understood the house to belong to my friend, but it seemed to be occupied by a native family—amongst which I noticed two very pretty girls with large dark Spanish eyes. I was not able to talk to them much, as it seemed the little Spanish I had managed to pick up was uttered quite regardless of all laws of pronunciation; but, as well as I could make out, the elder of the pretty girls, "Mariana," was my friend's housekeeper, and the mother had taken up her quarters for the purpose of assisting and taking care of her daughter and the house. The other daughter, who was really uncommonly pretty, had been told off for special duty to attend on me; she now, as a commencement, brought me a basin of water to complete my half-finished ablutions of the morning. When she had placed this on the table, a very little towel, almost the smallest thing of its kind I have ever seen, was produced. I thought she would now leave the

room, but instead of doing so, she coolly sat down on the only chair in it, and taking from her bosom a small skin tobacco pouch and some paper, commenced to make a cigarette. I stood still to watch the operation, which was performed by no unpractised hand, she all this while taking no notice whatsoever of me. When she had finished making her cigarette, she stood up and left the room. I now quickly divested myself of my shirt and commenced sponging at the basin, but at that moment she returned, and approaching me touched my shoulder to attract attention, which having secured, she took the lighted cigarette from her mouth and handed it to me. I was much astonished, but being in a foreign country and unacquainted with the manners and customs of the inhabitants, I thought I had better take things as I found them, and accordingly accepted the proffered cigarette with "muchas gracias," for, emphatically, there was nothing in her appearance to warrant one in rejecting a cigarette which was handed over in working order. She did not retire as I expected, but again seating herself on the solitary chair commenced twisting more tobacco; this time she made two, and approaching me said politely, "Permitè me, fuego, Señor." I now handed her my cigarette, from which she lighted hers; this she handed to me, instead of the remainder of my own, and taking the second one with which she had provided herself, she again lit up, and throwing the old half-smoked cigarette on the floor, left the room.

All this time I was endeavouring to dry myself and don my shirt, a matter of some difficulty, plied as I was with these attentions. I had almost succeeded in getting through my toilet when again my black-eyed attendant entered unceremoniously as before, now holding in her hand a small bowl called a "matè," the contents of which, a concoction made from the "yerba," or Para-

guayan tea, she was drinking or sucking through a silver tube called, a "bombilla," about nine inches long; this she took from her mouth and offered to me, but the attention I declined with "gracias." No refusal would be accepted. "Son muchos buenos," she insisted so perseveringly, that at length I was induced to accept it at her hands. I placed the "bombilla" in my mouth, as I had seen her do, and being quite *au fait* with a straw and sherry cobbler, I took a strong pull at the liquid, but only to let drop the bombilla, matè, and its contents on the ground, and to empty my mouth at the same time. I had been scalded; the deceitful matè-bowl had contained nothing but a bitter-sweet mixture of scalding water, which had burned my mouth horribly. I was very angry, so angry that my fair attendant flew from my presence, leaving the *débris* still upon the ground. My mouth was very painful. Had she played a practical joke upon me; or was this a custom of the country? Most decidedly I had seen her suck the scalding liquid, but then, perhaps the palates of these natives were of different construction from ours. However, I was not left long to my own imaginings, for in another instant my room was entered once more by my attendant, but this time followed by Mariana, Felicia, Simplicia, in fact, the whole family, mother and all. She looked very indignant and very much hurt, and pointing to me and the displaced articles on the ground, a lively conversation followed, the principal expressions used being, "bruto," "sonso," "gringo," (savage, fool, ignorant stranger), remarks in which the whole family seemed to concur. The articles were now picked up, and this interesting family withdrew, no doubt to heap more abuse upon the devoted head of the "gringo sonso," for politeness—a strict matter of discipline with these people—merely extracted from them a cold "Adios" as they left the room.

PWD

It was necessary for me, before arriving at my friend's quarters, to pass through the apartments of my attendant's family. In doing so I ascertained he was asleep, and was on no account to be disturbed. The interesting family were again hard at work on their matè-bowl, which they handed quickly from one to the other, replenishing it each time from a small kettle which stood upon some hot charcoal on a little pan-stove in a corner of the room, and fearing they might relent all the hard language they had lately used towards me, and endeavour once more to teach me the use of the bombilla, I beat a hasty retreat, with the intention of exploring the town.

It mattered little to me which side I took after leaving my friend's house, my object being to explore the town, and endeavour to form some idea in my own mind with regard to its extent and importance. I found that it was built in *cuadras* or squares, in the same manner as I have mentioned in respect to Melbourne, and the New World system.

I strolled about for a long time without its occurring to me that I might have some difficulty in retracing my steps, notwithstanding my experiences in the Australian bush, and the fact of the city being built in squares, as the very greatest similarity existed not alone in the appearance of all the streets, but in that of the houses also. Few buildings were at all pretentious or striking to the eye, and thus I had no guides or landmarks. In a short time my doubts became more serious. I tried to make myself understood when I inquired of the passers-by, "Adonde esta calle Libertad?" for I remembered the name of the street, and felt if I could once reach it I would easily find the house. But it was no use; no one whom I addressed either could or would comprehend my attempt at Spanish. I could not understand how this was, for no doubt existed in my own mind but that I had

certainly used the right words to express what I wished to know, and still every one I applied to only shook the head and replied, "No intiendo, Señor," and walked on. What was the reason of this? Could it be possible that in Rosario they did not use the Spanish language? I was beginning to feel quite tired now; for, of course, all this time I kept walking about, now turning to the right, anon to the left; at length I stopped in front of a casino where, in large letters, was announced the important fact that "Aqui se vende cerveza Inglesa," and feeling tired and thirsty I determined to enter and try the quality of the article I saw thus advertised, in the hope, also, that I might be fortunate enough in making myself understood, and by this means recover my bearings. On entering I was saluted by a tall, slight, sunburnt-looking individual, with head and whiskers trimmed à la Espagniola. He greeted my entrance with the usual "Buenos dias, Señor." To which I returned the customary reply, "Buenos gracias," at the same time continuing in what I felt certain was correct Spanish, "Dadme un botella de cerveza Inglesa," but to my astonishment he appeared to have no conception of what I asked for. I now asked him again, this time accentuating each syllable in my eagerness to make him understand, for I was beginning to get angry. He looked at me very hard for an instant, and at length replied with a strong Hibernian accent, "'Tis thrue, it is now nearly thirty years since I left ould Ireland, but I have not forgotten my own language yet. Maybe if you war to thry and spake in your own tongue I might be able to sarve you with what you're axing me for, and I will be very plased." Had I discovered the philosopher's stone I doubt very much if it could have given me more pleasure at the moment than thus finding myself under the roof of a countryman with whom I could freely converse.

The wished-for "cerveza" was quickly produced, and in a short time not only had I been promised an escort to my mysterious quarters, but I had received from my host full particulars about every one and everything in Rosario.

When I reached my friend's house, which I eventually did, I heard from his attendants he was awake and had been inquiring for me. He was very ill indeed; far more so than he appeared to think himself. The doctor had just left him, and was to return next morning accompanied by a brother practitioner for consultation. He was now attended by a countryman, to whom he introduced me—Mr. Tom O'Shaughnessy from Athlone, but at present a free rover of the Camps of Santa Fè. Mr. Tom O'Shaughnessy shook my hand warmly, and assured me that if ever I should find myself in his neighbourhood—which, by-the-bye, appeared to have a wide range according to the wording of our introduction—he would be very glad to see me. I told them about the difficulty I had in retracing my steps, and how all my attempts at speaking Spanish had failed. This, they explained, was accounted for by indifferent pronunciation and the wide difference which existed between the Spanish spoken in South America—except amongst the more educated classes—and the pure Castilian; and also by the fact that no "native" possessed the faculty or sharpness of seeing what one is driving at, as we should do if addressed in very bad or broken English by a foreigner. Tom O'Shaughnessy, who now volunteered to show me about, was a large, vulgar-looking man, who had passed many years in the country. He had never made much progress himself, although he had been employed in his time on almost half the Irish estancias in the province. All he cared for, to use his own words, was "fun and sport;" this, as well as I could make out, consisted in his galloping over the pampas,

calling at all the *pulperias** on his way, and visiting his friends in turn. I went for a walk with him after a little, on which occasion he had undertaken to show me the best place to dine in Rosario, and when the time arrived for dining I could not do less than invite him to join me; this he readily consented to do, with the remark "that it just suits me; I dislike dining alone, and would always dine with a friend if I could." A very greasy dinner was served at this fancy hotel of his; but what was my astonishment to find that in the midst of our meal the worthy Tom, who looked the picture of health, complained of feeling ill, and begged me to excuse him. Of course, under the circumstances, I was obliged to let him go, and to continue dinner by myself. It appeared strange to me this sudden illness, but then I was abroad, and it might have been accounted for by climatic changes. When I had finished my repast, settled with "moso," and proceeded some distance on the road towards home, I was overtaken in the dark by a breathless individual, whom I recognised as my late "seedy" acquaintance. His face was beaming with pleasure as he uttered in joyful tones, "It's all right. I have given the blackguard the slip this time. Come along and we'll have some fun." I told him I was very glad to see by his appearance that he had got all right again: but I could not quite understand about the "slip" he mentioned. However, I must postpone the amusement he alluded to, as I was determined to spend the evening with my sick friend.

As we proceeded homeward O'Shaugnhessy explained the cause of his sudden illness; he had seen a creditor of his enter the room, and he knew him to have a judge's order to arrest him when and where he could—a law of the country—so he thought the best thing he could do

* Rough country stores, including the sale of spirits, &c.

would be to try and give him the "slip," without waiting to explain matters to me, and this he had succeeded in doing.

* * * *

While in the middle of the story a very excited little dark man came behind us, and, catching O'Shaughnessy by the arm, endeavoured to arrest him. He had, it seems, been following him all the while; he was quickly shaken off, however, by his powerful opponent, who proceeded onwards, followed, however, by the little infuriated creditor, who was now holding on to the thong of a hunting-whip, which O'Shaughnessy carried. In this way he was literally dragged through the street, calling and gesticulating all the while at his prisoner as he insisted on it he was to stop, but O'Shaughnessy would neither stop nor give up his whip. In this order they proceeded some distance, until they arrived at a garden wall, which O'Shaughnessy nimbly scaled; but when he stood upon the top the little tradesman still held on pertinaciously to the thong, which he had now twisted about his arm, and from the appearance of the scene, round which a number of idlers had already collected, it appeared to me that the little man was being hanged, for the powerful prisoner (?) in his exertions to recover the whip, had almost pulled him from the ground to the elevated position he himself occupied. At last the little fellow let go, and at the same instant Mr. Tom O'Shaughnessy disappeared over the wall and was not again seen.

While I was sitting the same evening with my invalid friend the veritable Tom entered the room. "Didn't I sarve him right, the little spalpeen?—bad luck to him! Shure he wanted to stale my whip entirely, and maybe he thinks I'd be afther paying him for an ould coat that's wore out long ago; he must wait for his money."

Next morning at daylight Mr. Thomas O'Shaughnessy of the Camps had disappeared from Rosario, and I am afraid the little tailor lived to find out the truth of the last words, "he must wait for his money." I heard from everybody subsequently that "Tom" was a bad lot, but as the Spanish proverb says—

"Obra de commun, obra de ningun,"

I shall say no more about him, further than this, that I omitted to call upon him in the Camps.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Proposed visit to the quinta—The interesting family again—A sensational "tub"—A successful ruse—The consultation—Typhoid fever—Equestrian difficulties—The road to the quinta—The quinta and its occupants—Caña—Necessity for revolvers—The individual in the hammock shows signs of life—Mr. Peter Brown's Spanish—Impressions—The return—A friend at Roldan—Resolution—Despondency of the interesting family—The road to Roldan—The Camps—"Biscacheros"—Burrowing owls—Tierra tierra—My friends the B.'s—A Christmas invitation—A change for the worse—Difficulties—In a critical condition—The sick man's request—A strange presentiment—The fulfilment—Family matters—Death of McC.

MY little black-eyed attendant seemed to have forgotten all about the upset of the matè-cup, but not so myself, for my mouth was still very painful. I sat up with my poor friend for some time before retiring to rest. He wished me, he said, to ride out next day to see his quinta, which was about three miles from town, and he thought, perhaps, I would rather put up there for the present than remain in town; at all events I could have my choice; so it was arranged that I should set out after breakfast next morning.

I cannot say much in favour of the *cattre* or stretcher, which had been provided for my reception; nevertheless, I did not find much difficulty in falling quickly asleep, for between my being "a stranger" in the streets and all my other little adventures of the day, I had gone through quite enough to make me tired.

Next morning, on awaking, I opened my door to inquire

how the invalid passed the night; the interesting family were all again busy sucking away at the nauseous matè-cup, but Mariana, the housekeeper and elder of the party, informed me that he had passed a very feverish and restless night. I had some difficulty in procuring a wash-tub, wherefrom to sponge myself, but when it did make its appearance, the old mother and my attendant, who produced it, looked at the tub and then at me, and laughed immoderately. I waited patiently until they should leave the room, but this they did not seem at all inclined to do. They were evidently determined to see it out—whatever performance I was about to go through. I tried to explain, assisted by gesticulations, that I was about to undress, get into the water, and sponge myself—this I tried to explain by imitating, as best I could, the proceeding of divesting myself of a portion of my clothes and holding the sponge over my head, but all to no effect, they only laughed the more. At last I hit upon the happy expedient of asking them to let me try the matè again. This had a magic effect upon them, for at once they both hurried off to brew the scalding liquid, and, taking advantage of their exit, I took the precaution of fastening my door, for I had no intention of letting either mother, daughter, or matè into my room any more that morning until my toilette was completed.

When I reached the sick-chamber, I found the doctors had already arrived. They were in close consultation in the window recess. I could perceive by the earnest manner of their conversation that some important change had taken place in the sick man's symptoms. The invalid looked at me, but did not say anything. When the consultation was ended, I asked the doctors, drawing them aside privately, how they found the invalid. They shook their heads ominously, as they replied that it was a very bad case of typhoid fever, and that if some change for the

better did not take place soon, he would hardly get over the attack. "Great care," they said, "must be taken of him for the next few days."

I was much pained to hear this gloomy account of my future partner's health; I knew too well what a treacherous disease this typhoid fever is, and I determined, so far as lay in my power, to do all I could towards relieving him and attending to his wants. When I next approached him, he was more calm, and spoke to me; he told me he knew the danger he was in, but begged I would not neglect to ride out to his quinta, as arranged the evening before.

I had some difficulty in inducing the horse which was selected for me to leave the stable; I had provided myself with an ash plant which I had brought from home, but this was broken at once on the rhinoceros-like hide of my steed, and when eventually he did consent to leave his stable—why he wished to remain there I could not comprehend, for certainly it did not present a very inviting appearance—I did not think it advisable to venture even three miles from home without my spurs, which I called for on my way.

The road to the quinta led us through a number of brick-fields and "alfalfa" farms—I say "us," for I had been provided with a guide. My horse got on pretty well once we got clear of the town, previously to which he had endeavoured to turn round the corner of each street leading towards the stables, but now he seemed willing to perform the journey to the quinta.

When we reached our destination, a pretty looking little green farm, through the centre of which an avenue, lined on both sides by peach-trees, led to a small cottage, we were met by a workman, or "peon," as they are called, and a young fellow, a cousin of McC——'s, who had lately arrived and was "getting experience of quinta life." They did not appear to be very busy, any of them, as

when I entered the house I perceived another individual, who had been too lazy, I supposed, to rise, stretched upon a hammock. We talked for some time, and then "caña," or white rum, was produced. This spirit, which at first is most unpalatable, is, if good, about the safest and most wholesome spirit to be had in the country. It is, unfortunately, very cheap, and within the reach of almost everybody; and consequently, as may be supposed, leads to a great deal of drinking at times, especially amongst the native "Gauchos," who are much addicted to it, and the excessive use of it, no doubt, leads to many of the dreadful murders and assassinations which are so rife in this province, and which render it necessary for every one who ventures outside town—even for the distance of one mile—to carry a loaded revolver in the belt.

When we had all partaken of this refreshment, the individual in the hammock, who did not appear too lazy to accept his glass, commenced to show some signs of life, and turning his face in my direction, evidently addressed me, but what he said, or what language he spoke, I could not tell. Thinking he must be a native of the soil, I replied in Spanish, "No intiendo." At this they all laughed. I could not see what there was to laugh at in my reply, and so I told them, but they only laughed the more—laughter in which the mysterious individual now joined. At length it was explained that the unknown quantity in the hammock was Mr. Peter Brown, a native, not of South America, but of Scotland, and the language he spoke was not "Gaucho-Spanish," as I supposed, but what he called English—it may have been English, nobody was likely to know that but himself, but it would require a Scotchman to understand it.

I did not think very much of the quarters which had been provided for me in Rosario, but they certainly were very much better than anything I was likely to get

at the quinta, and I made up my mind, that under no circumstances would I be induced to migrate to the "pretty farm outside town."

My horse did not seem to have the same objection to leaving the quinta as it had evinced when leaving the town, and the latter was soon reached. I was not sorry when the animal was safe in its stable again, as I thought all the time, when going and returning from the quinta, he would certainly fall on his head, and as I intended next day visiting a friend at Roldan, a distance from town of about thirteen miles, I asked, as a favour, to be supplied with a more lively animal for the coming gallop of the morrow.

I did not go into particulars with my sick friend with regard to his quinta on my return, further than to tell him that I would for the present prefer not to move my quarters. The fact was I had made up my mind that my assistance was needed at the sick-bed, and until a change for the better took place resolved not to be far off. Nothing remarkable occurred during the day worthy of note, and my attendant did not renew her exertions towards teaching me the use of the "bombilla," in fact an air of despondency seemed to have come over the interesting family since the morning, when I had got them out of my room under false pretences.

The horse supplied to me the following morning, as far as appearance went, was in no way superior to the wretched quadruped of the day before, but his performances were far better, and I was carried to Roldan in first-rate style. The Camps we passed through were very good samples, I was told, of the average Camps of the province. Here and there a solitary tree; occasionally we passed whole districts covered with high thistles, high enough to hide man and horse were he disposed to take advantage of them, but they would be very uncomfortable things to ride through.

Other parts were short sheep pastures, with here and there vast flocks browsing at peace; the most beautiful vermillion and lilac verbenas grew plentifully all around us, adding a brilliancy to a scene which would otherwise have been monotonous.

A number of biscacha* holes, or "biscatueros," as they are called—"eros" corresponding to "burrows" with us—were scattered all over the Camps. These little animals do not show themselves during the day, but from the appearance of these burrows one would have imagined them to belong to owls, grey and silver foxes, and a host of other animals, which were to be seen either peering from the holes, as we passed, or flying or scampering towards them.

The little owls† I have mentioned, whenever they wandered a short distance from home, would be warned of any near approach of danger by their friends the "Tierra tierra," or spur-winged plover of the pampas, which acted as a kind of camp sentinel rising from the ground in all directions uttering their shriek cry of "Terror, terror," hovering in the air round the horseman, sometimes coming within arm's length. Thus a warning was given not only to the owls, but to everything else within reach of hearing. On many subsequent occasions I found to my annoyance the effect produced by the "Terror, terror," of these birds on the wary game I was endeavouring to stalk.

My friends the B——s were at home, and in the midst of their "shearing," for it was the middle of spring. I had known the younger of the two brothers slightly at home, and was, consequently, now introduced as an old friend to all present. I spent a very pleasant afternoon watching the "Gauchos" shearing; they appeared to be

* A burrowing animal, very common in the pampas of Buenos Ayres.

† The burrowing-owl (*Pholeopynx cunicularia*). These little birds do not live in the same chamber as the biscacha, but excavate a branch line for themselves.

very expert. The system pursued was to give a *lata*, or small round tin mark to each man, in exchange for the fleece, as it was placed upon the table provided for this purpose.

When leaving I promised to return the following month to spend my Christmas, and remain a day or two.

When I reached my sick friend's quarters that night, I found several young friends of his with him. A change had taken place for the worse, and the doctor, who was to return shortly, had appeared very despondent of his case. Poor fellow, he was very patient under all his suffering. He wandered a great deal in his conversation, and many extraordinary statements escaped him, which showed me that his affairs were in a very unsettled, if not in a very depressed state, caused, as he tried to explain to me, by his foreman who had got him into difficulties.

For several days he continued in this critical condition, sometimes his medical attendants expressing a hope, at others being very despondent; but about the tenth day he was decidedly fast declining, and, in my opinion, had not many hours to live. He was a fine young fellow I believe—although I had never seen him out of bed—and I always heard him very kindly spoken of. He was decidedly a favourite. I sat up with him nearly all that night, and had hardly laid my head down for more than half an hour before the attendant who had taken my place awakened me, saying, "The sick man wanted to see me again for a moment."

When I entered the apartment at four A.M. I was struck by the wonderful change which had come over the patient since I had seen him only half an hour previously. He asked me to sit by his side for an instant. He wished me to do a last favour for him. "Go," said he, "at once and call upon my friend A—— at the Hotel de Paris, and ask him to procure me a coffin, the very longest one he can get, for I will die to-day before twelve o'clock;

then call upon Mr. C—— the clergyman, and ask him to come and see me. I am very anxious to talk with him for a while." I promised to do as he requested, for I thought it neither wise nor kind to argue with him. I was about to leave the room for the purpose when I was recalled. "I want to die quietly," he continued, "without having another interview in this world with Henrique. He will return from Buenos Ayres this very day, and will pass these windows just about the time that life is ebbing from me, and I want you not to allow him to enter my room till I am dead." I told him I would do my best to execute all his wishes, and immediately set about doing so; there was too much earnestness in his words and look to admit of hesitation.

When I reached the hotel I had some difficulty in gaining an entry at that early hour of the morning. I found A—— in bed, sleeping soundly. He was rather annoyed at being disturbed; but when I delivered my sad message—a message which I had some difficulty in inducing him to accept—he asked me again and again, "Could it be possible he is ordering his own coffin?" "And is there really no chance for the poor fellow? What an extraordinary idea that is he has got into his head, that his man will pass his house just as he is dying! I don't wonder he wishes to die without ever seeing him again, for I believe he has ruined him. He's a great blackguard, and poor McC—— was a real good fellow." These were the remarks he rapidly made previous to my wishing him good morning. I found the clergyman getting up; he was very sorry indeed to hear of the sad change which had taken place for the worse. He soon accompanied me to the dying man, and taking a seat by his bedside, commenced reading that portion of the New Testament containing Christ's Sermon on the Mount. When he had read as far as that part where the Lord's Prayer

occurs, poor McC—— joined heartily with us; but before its conclusion his mind had wandered, and there was no further use in continuing reading. He remained unconscious for some hours, when he seemed to brighten up again, and spoke of his family and family matters; but he soon relapsed, and at about ten minutes before twelve there were visible signs that he had foretold his own hour. At that moment the sound of horses' feet were heard galloping by the windows, and the girl Mariana came to me and said, "Henrique Bowers has just ridden by on his return from Buenos Ayres." I hurried from the apartment, remembering my dying friend's words, "I want to die without seeing that man again," and "he will pass these windows just as life is ebbing." What wonderful second-sight! I thought, as I hurried towards the stables in order to intercept him, for I was sure he would endeavour to reach his master's house the moment he heard of his dangerous condition.

I was right. Before I reached half way I met him hurrying towards the house. I knew him by description at once, and endeavoured to prevent him rushing suddenly into the presence of the dying man; but he would not listen to me. I followed close behind him, and as we drew near the house it *struck twelve.* At that instant two of the native women made their appearance at the door; they were weeping bitterly, and I thus knew my future partner was no more.

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When I entered the sick-chamber I heard he had passed from this life shortly before it struck twelve o'clock. Henrique was too late, and thus poor McC—— was saved the torture of again beholding his hated foreman. The matter was reported *in propriâ formâ* to her Majesty's consul, and that same afternoon he was buried in the English cemetery.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Sad—"What shall I do?"—In want of a confidential adviser—Disinterested advice—A very nice "caballeriza"—The bargain concluded—Marking horses—My new quarters—The Caballeriza Central—My customers—*Caballos de Passear*—Young men of fashion—Chillanos—Matters of reform—Hired horses—Sailors and their horses—Knowing ones—Buck-jumpers and jibbers—Horse stealing—Arrest of the "ugly German with spectacles"—The result—Buenos Ayres—Lighterage—Dr. N. of Assuncion—Irish sheep farmers—Fencing and fattening—The "Gran Chaco" animals—Fishes—Reptiles—Return to Rosario—Driving tandem—A profitable carriage—An advertisement—One hundred splendid horses—Enlarging the premises.

POOR McC——'s death was very sad. He was a young man just in the prime of life, and one with many of those qualities which are requisite abroad to insure success. It left me in rather an awkward predicament, as I had made all arrangements for joining him, and had even provided all the different articles which he had recommended and enumerated. What was I to do with dog-carts and open carriages, and landaus, and a quantity of saddlery, unless I continued the same business I had intended when setting out for the country? Already my prospects were beginning to be discussed, and several suggestions were made by interested parties with a view to the profitable investment of my capital. In fact I was in the same position as poor Napoleon at Sedan, in want of a confidential adviser, and like him,—

"I walked with myself and talked with myself, and thus myself said to me: Look to thyself, and take care of thyself, for nobody cares for thee."

And as a sequence, I was very careful. The most pressing temptation suggested was to carry on the business lately in the hands of my poor friend, in connection with his disreputable foreman; but for many reasons I rejected this offer. No doubt it was advisable to do something in this way, under the peculiar circumstances of my coming to the country, as I have described, and I was advised by disinterested parties both in town and camp that a good business of this kind would be a profitable investment under the circumstances, and on every side I was assured of support, but on no account was I to be mixed up in the old establishment. A very nice "caballeriza," or livery stable was for sale in another and better part of the town; it was the property of Don Manoel Arragon, a diminutive but industrious man who had made a fortune in "alfalfa,"* during the Paraguayan war, and he now wished to dispose of this branch of his business. The place seemed to suit me very well, and as the price asked was within my means, and the terms moderate, a bargain was concluded between us, and the "caballeriza" handed over to me in full working order.

A number of horses belonging to the establishment were at grass on his farm, and it was necessary for me to accompany him there in order to receive and mark them with my own registered brand—a harp—which I had had selected; for it is the law of the country that all unmarked horses belong to the State, and when a horse is sold, it has first either to be countermarked, that is to say the owner's own mark is again put on, this time reversed, and the purchaser's mark is then added, or a certificate must be given. This ceremony I now had to go through, and a tough morning's work it was for young E—— S—— and myself marking about forty animals.

On my return to town I busied myself in preparing my

* A kind of coarse grass, something like our clover.

own quarters, a small cottage which stood on the premises. As may be imagined, they required a good deal of soap, water, and whitewash in order that they might be rendered habitable, after having been occupied by "natives" for some years. With some trouble and a deal of "elbow-grease," all was prepared, and my two bedrooms and office and sitting-room combined, if they did not present a very luxurious appearance, were at least clean and habitable.

The "Caballeriza Central," although it would contrast poorly with a well-organized English establishment, was by far the most roomy and best of its kind in Rosario, which city—a city of 30,000 inhabitants—was at the time unprovided with tramways or ordinary street conveyances, such as are now to be seen; and on this account every one who could afford it kept a horse. In fact, the correct thing to do was to keep a horse and "passear," that is, to prance round the principal streets with a very tight curb and very long spurs, so that the cavalier and his fiery steed might appear to advantage before his "señorita." Sometimes the horse ridden would be a "Chillano" or Chillian horse, and then the beau would indeed be irresistible. These horses are trained when young to very high action, and they dance about the streets in a most uncomfortable manner with their effeminate burdens, who thus mounted have the appearance of vain but uncivilised coxcombs, when the "Gaucho poncho," or native costume, is exchanged for an imitation of the latest London or Paris fashions.

As I have said, the "Caballeriza Central" was a spacious establishment, and consequently a great many of these notabilities kept horses there, and amongst them were many "Chillanos," which had borne their gallant riders over many a league of camp, where dwelt the black-eyed "novia" to be wooed and won.

Besides these specialties, most of the English and German residents enjoyed their afternoon ride, and kept

their "Caballos de passear"; and in addition to this, it was necessary to keep a very large stock of horses for letting or hiring out for riding or driving purposes.

I was soon initiated into the mysteries of stable-keeping, although, of course, I had much to learn yet. I secured all the custom of the place and managed to retain it, and give the greatest satisfaction to all customers. I introduced many matters of reform, and horses which were comparatively unfit for the "passear" were soon got into condition, and helped to replace their now grateful owners in the good opinion of their friends.

It was very amusing on many occasions to see the curious individuals who would present themselves for a mount; they would all appear anxious to be considered by the ostlers good horsemen, and sometimes I would be asked as a favour to say which was the proper side to mount from, in order that they should make no mistake when the horse was brought to them.

These "hired horses" had a wretched life of it; it seemed to be the universal opinion that the hirer of a horse was bound to take as much out of it as possible for his money, and often they would be kept out and galloped all day without either food or water.

Sailors seemed to have a great idea of riding, and it was necessary to keep special animals for them; these were the oldest and quietest horses in the stable, who knew their way about. These worthy mariners were expected to pay the hire of their horses before leaving the yard, and as they always pulled up at the first "pulperia," or public house, they came to, leaving the horse outside, often quite unsecured, the horse would as invariably return to the stable to be ready for the next owner.

Many knowing ones would refuse to hire the old horse which was provided, and would offer to pay a larger price, in order to secure a more comfortable and better condi-

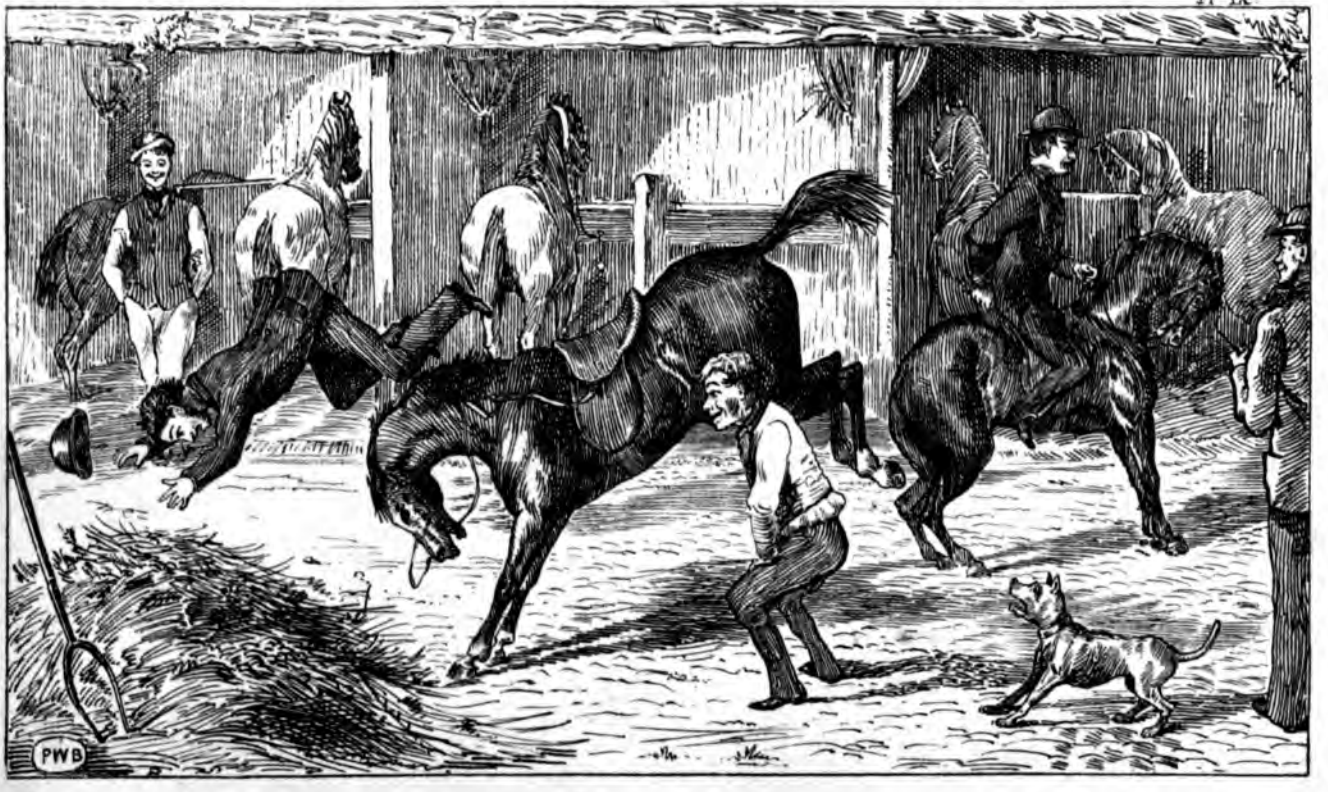
tioned mount, but as it would never do to lend out valuable horses in this way, two or three buck-jumpers and "jibbers" were kept, which would be shown to the intending hirer, who, in the greatest admiration, would make his selection. If he was unfortunate enough to select the buckjumper he would be invited to mount in a soft spot, and as a rule would either be standing on his head or in a swimming attitude on the ground before he had well taken his seat, when usually nothing would induce him to remount, or if he did, it was most surely to meet with the same fate again—this time to be content with any substitute.

If the "empacador," or "jibber," was selected, the hocussed hirer would be allowed to expend all his arts and lickings in his endeavours to force the animal into motion, much to the amusement of the grooms and lookers on. But, of course, nothing could induce the horse to leave the yard, until an ostler, well-known to the stubborn quadruped, would, "just to show there was no deception in the affair," canter him up and down the yard; but on the stranger-victim again mounting, his muscles would stiffen and he would become as immovable as before.

Very often horses were hired and never returned, the thieves having a whole day to make good their escape before suspicion would be excited. Often these horses were recovered, and, on one occasion the thieves accidentally called and demanded shelter from a friend and customer of mine who knew my mark, "the harp," and having heard of my loss, not only detained the horses but the riders also, handing them over to the authorities.

On another occasion, one of my favourite horses was stolen by an individual, a German well-known in Rosario. I heard the direction he had taken, and through the police gave notice by telegram. The message which these stupid officials dispatched, summarised from a written

Pl IX



description I had furnished, was, I suppose on the principle that brevity is the soul of wit: "Horse stolen from Caballeriza Central; arrest ugly German with spectacles entering St. Nicholas." Now St. Nicholas, a large town some sixteen leagues distant, contained many German residents; and as a great many Germans are decidedly ugly, and nearly all wear spectacles, the police of St. Nicholas made a raid and arrested a number of them, fortunately amongst the number being the right man. I was obliged to visit St. Nicholas in order to recognise him. Of course, I apologised to the other "ugly" Germans; but no blame could attach to me, as my description had been much more explanatory.

I had received notice from my consignee at Buenos Ayres of the arrival there of some carriages and other articles on my account, and I was consequently obliged to proceed to that city in order to see after them, as some of them, I had made up my mind, were much too good for my purposes at Rosario. Upon my arrival I found they had been dispatched from the customs, and it was now my attention was first directed to the ruinous charges for lighterage from the "roads," which I have mentioned in a previous chapter. Part of my goods were now reshipped for Rosario, while one handsome landau was sent to an auction mart for sale.

While in Buenos Ayres I determined to remain a few days. There was much to be seen to interest and amuse me, and those to whom I was introduced were most kind and hospitable. I had travelled from Rosario in company with Dr. N——, of Assuncion, who had given me a most interesting account of his personal experiences in Paraguay during the war, and his interviews with Lopez Jordan, and with him I now visited Mr. Mulhall and the *Standard* Museum, where I was much interested in the well-defined descriptions I heard from that gentleman of many parts of

the country, and of the great success which had attended the perseverance and industry of the Irish sheep farmer, many of whom had, not only accumulated large fortunes, but had, by their knowledge and tact in the management of stock, been worthy examples to be followed with profit by others. I quote his own words with regard to the important matter of fencing, and as he touched on many other topics of interest, I also subjoin them for the benefit of any of my readers who may take an interest in the Argentine Republic :—

"FENCING AND FATTENING.

"When a certain Irish farmer from Australia arrived in this country ten years ago, and hired two leagues of camp with the purpose of fencing it, he was regarded by everyone as a lunatic. People who owned their own camps did not think it a paying business to undergo the cost of fencing ; how then could it suit a tenant to fence another man's property ? We can remember that Dr. Eulogio de la Gitana, one of the richest estancieros in the province, said to Mr. O——, 'As you are so anxious to lose all your money, it would be easier and pleasanter for you to put it in a bag and drop it into the Rio Salado.'

"Nevertheless, the Irish-Australian had made his calculations rightly, and, as he observed to us last week, 'My fence has been paid for ten times over by the peons' wages that I saved.' He has made money so rapidly that his neighbour, Sr. Gitana, has fenced his land, and come into the belief that the Ingleses somehow are right.

"It is interesting to consider for a moment the great advantage derived from fencing compared with the trifling cost, especially if you have an estancia within forty leagues of the city, or near a railway station, so as to be able to fatten cattle for market. Suppose you buy a league of good camp for a million and a half currency, fence it at a

cost of 160,000 dollars (paper), and stock it with 3,000 horned cattle, you will have a net return of more than 300,000 dollars per annum, say 14 per cent. on your capital over all expenses. If you do not fence the land, but allow your neighbour's cattle to graze on it, you will hardly get more than 7 or 8 per cent. on your capital.

"The price of land in Buenos Ayres has never before been known to reach the present figures, and it would seem that fencing has given this extraordinary impulse. The first man who ever paid a million dollars for a league of land (in 1862) was Mr. Casey, of Navarro, on a memorable afternoon under the Cabildo, at a judicial auction; and when the notary-public announced that Mr. Lorenzo Casey was the purchaser at one million dollars per league, the bystanders exclaimed, 'Estos Ingleses estan locos.' Fencing was then unknown, and it is only since men like Shennan, Reid, MacClymont, Murphy, Ballasty, and Gahan have practically shown how much cattle a league of fenced land can carry, that we see such prices as Mr. Stegmann paid last week for land forty leagues from our city.

"Fourteen thousand pounds (or two millions currency) per league may now be regarded as the market price for good land in this province. It is about £2 per acre, and men who know Australia consider Buenos Ayres camps cheap at this price. In Australia it is common to pay £1 an acre for land that will carry 2,000 or 3,000 sheep to the square league (say ten and a half square miles), whereas Buenos Ayres camps carry from 20,000 to 30,000 sheep per league.

"And this leads us up to another point well deserving the attention of farmers and economists. Heretofore Buenos Ayres has been refining sheep merely as a wool-growing article, and paying enormous prices for Negrettes and Rambouillets. But the time is probably at hand

when *Frigorifiques* and such like vessels will eagerly buy up our heavy mutton for the European market. Lincolns and South Downs will come into greater demand than the finest strains of the Imperial cabanas of Vienna, Rambouillet, or Silesia.

"English sheep thrive amazingly at the Falklands, and at many estancias in this province. Wethers of the cross-breed between Lincolns and mestiza sheep are sold for the Buenos Ayres market at 90 dollars per head, or double the ordinary price, and as they require no more care than mestiza sheep they cannot fail to come into demand."

I also heard from the same authority an interesting account of the "gran chaco." "The territory of the chaco," he told me, "was in every respect suited both for agricultural and pasturage farming, being well watered by numerous rivers and their tributaries, the principal of which," he said, "were the Rio de los Amores, Arroyo del Rey, Saladillo, the Rio Negro, and Rio Tragadero, many thriving colonies being distributed over the districts."

The impenetrable forests contain valuable timber, exquisite fruit, and fragrant flowers; medicinal plants are most numerous, and it is as rich in the animal as the vegetable kingdom, amongst which will be found the jaguar, gato de Montes, aguraguazu, carpincho, nutria, wild boar, deer, antelopes, and many others.

Great numbers of monkeys are seen playing upon the branches of the trees; birds are innumerable, and ostriches are abundant in the interior.

The rivers, streams, and "lagunas," contain many varieties of fish; and amongst the reptiles is found the caiman or yacare.

I was sorry I had not an opportunity before eventually leaving the country [illegible] this interesting district.

A few days wer[illegible] cier[illegible] opinion, to

remain in Buenos Ayres, as in that time all could be done, a ride to Belgrano completing everything of interest to be seen in the suburbs. I noticed that a very much better breed of horses was to be met with in Buenos Ayres, than could be obtained in the more northern camps, probably on account of the extra care taken in their breeding.

On my return to Rosario I found my goods had arrived before me; and for the first time in that city a real English dog-cart and tandem might now be seen. The dog-cart proved to be a really good investment, and was always in great demand, both by the "beaux" and the business population.

My landau, which I had sold in Buenos Ayres, had returned me a very handsome profit, notwithstanding the heavy duty and the high freight and lighterage; and I might really consider myself, I thought, at last on the fair road towards that fortune of which I was in search; and an imposing advertisement daily made its appearance in the *Standard* to the following effect:—

"ENGLISH LIVERY STABLE.—H. L. B. (Proprietor). Horses, carriages—the very best in Rosario—to be had at all hours, on the most reasonable terms. The coaches have been recently imported from England, and the stables are the best known in Rosario, having formerly belonged to Don Manuel Arragon.

"Over 100 splendid horses at present in the stable."

Each day business increased, and in a short time it was even necessary to build several additions in the way of stabling.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Camps of Frayle Muerto—The Monte pioneers—Indian raiders—Estancia houses—Explanations—Difficulties of the first settlers—Monte Molino—Retaliation—Ostriches—Deer—Steam-plough—Melrose—The English races—Partidos—Intense excitement—"Little Jimmy Watt"—The English horse—The native horse—The race—The result—Cañada de Gomez—English settlers—Their prospects—Breeding horses—Exportation of horses to Europe—An experienced farmer—Unsuccessful results—A model reaping-machine—Las Rosas—Adventure with a skunk—The result—Anecdote of the parson and the horse.

SHORTLY after my return from Buenos Ayres, I was invited by a number of friends to visit the Camps of Frayle Muerto; the English races, they said, were to come off, and a great match between an English half-bred, ridden by an Englishman in English fashion, and a native horse ridden by a Gaucho in native style, was to take place, and a large assemblage was expected to be present.

Frayle Muerto is situated midway between Cordova and Rosario, about one hundred and fifty miles north, and has a station on the Central Argentine Railway, where I was met by my friends, and taken to their "Monte," where I was to spend some days. My friends were young fellows, who with a small capital were endeavouring as pioneers to make their way—and [illegible] difficult work they found it. They had a few sh[illegible] of h[illegible] a little cultivation, the latter [illegible] all their means, and as yet [illegible]

camps were unsuited to sheep, and the few kept were only for the table, as those who had placed cattle upon camp found they had merely done so for the benefit of the Indians, who made periodical raids, carrying cattle, horses, and everything before them, dealing destruction at the same time to all those who were unprotected, or had not made their escape in time.

The house was a square-built "azotea" or flat-roofed building, divided into four rooms, with whitewashed walls. In fact, this is more or less the kind of house found throughout the country, and it is only in the size of the building, the ornamentation and colouring of the exterior, that any appreciable difference is observed in the ordinary estancia house, at least in the Northern Camps.

"Monte" is the name given to the planting or group of trees and shrubs which surrounds the house. This generally consists of a number of acacia, algorobas, and a quantity of fruit-trees of several varieties, principally the peach, which tree flourishes well, growing to a considerable size, and in suitable soil assuming the proportions of orchard apple-trees in this country, and yielding abundance of very delicious fruit; on this account many estan- have the prefix "Monte" such as "Monte Molino," "Monte Gavarro," two estancias in this neighbourhood. My friends' house was a very primitive establishment, and indeed these pioneers did not seem to have many comforts about them; nevertheless I received a hearty welcome, and the lion's share of all they had was heaped upon me.

Some of the young fellows who were living at this estancia had been amongst the first settlers—and certainly the account they gave of themselves, and the pros- ts of this English colony at Frayle Muerto, was not raging. Numbers, they said, of the first arrivals had

already deserted the place. They had expended considerable sums of money on substantial buildings and other investments, but the continued raids of these Indians so disheartened them that eventually they deserted their homes, for which it was impossible now to find other purchasers, the Government being either unable or too careless to keep in check these troublesome neighbours of the frontiers. One estancia in particular was brought to my notice, "Monte Molino;" it had belonged to some half-dozen, resolute young fellows, not at all nervous or easily beaten, but who had left their camp disheartened, after having gone so far as retaliating on the Indians, and making a raid for the recovery of stolen property, nor were they altogether unsuccessful on more than one occasion.

While we rode through these camps hosts of ostriches, as they are called—but strictly speaking rheas (*Rhea Americana*) were put to flight, and it was interesting to watch the great speed at which they travel over the grassy camps. This bird is most characteristic of the scenery; it differs essentially from the true ostrich of the old world in its smaller stature, and in having three toes instead of two.

Large herds of the beautiful little pampas deer (*Cervus campestris*) also abound in these camps, and numbers of their antlers may be picked up during a short ride. We visited numerous estancias during my stay, amongst others that of "Steam-plough Melrose," the most industrious agriculturist in the neighbourhood of whom I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

The great day of the races had now arrived. Large crowds of natives from all parts of the surrounding country were already on the ground. The English also mustered in considerable numbers. The betting ran very high, the natives backing their own horse to any amount. "Mañadas of mares," and herds or flocks of sheep and cattle,

were likely to exchange hands on this memorable occasion. In lieu of money, these Gauchos, fond at all times of games of hazard, were willing now to wager upon their own horse anything they possessed. Two or three minor races in native fashion had first to be got through, but the race of the day, *par excellence*, was the match. These native races are, as a rule, very tiresome, although sometimes great speed is shown. They are ridden bare-backed, but a number of false starts, or "partidos" are allowed, sixteen being the maximum, and very often this number is actually run through before a final start is made. During these "partidos," each jockey endeavours to out-manœuvre his opponent by gaining a stride or neck in advance; and this advantage, in their peculiar style of racing—which is going as hard as they can from start to finish, whipping over every inch—is considered sufficient to turn the scale.

The excitement was now intense on each side; the event that was about to be decided seemed to be one which affected the honour of both parties, the English and the natives. The race was to be run without any partidos. When Billy K—— made his appearance, leading his well-trained chesnut horse, "Alarm," accompanied by his jockey, "little Jimmy Watt," it certainly did look in every way "fit," its owner having spared no pains in putting it into proper form, and every muscle seemed fit to perform its proper function. The native horse also presented a very creditable appearance; it appeared beautifully "toussared," but perhaps a little fleshy. And now the tug of war was about to commence. The English horse was saddled in the ordinary way, but the native was to ride "en palo," or barebacked. Jimmy Watt—to use his own expression—"felt all there," and full of confidence. He was a capital horseman, and had gained the highest repute amongst both natives and foreigners as a jockey, riding in native fashion with the same ease and success as in the

saddle—not excepting his agility and adroitness in the use of the "rebenque," or native "chastiser."

Races are things which do not take long to decide, and many sportsmen are fond of assuring one that "the race was decided as soon as the animals made their appearance in the paddock;" while others aver "that you never can tell till the numbers are up." Be these prophets right or wrong, there is no doubt that this particular race was not over until the English horse had passed the post; for although it won, still the race was stiffly contested, and it was only by superior manipulation that "Little Jimmy" succeeded in landing his horse a winner and its owner a small fortune. Great cheering and rejoicing took place among the English in honour of this victory, and although several races were afterwards run, nothing else was talked about for the remainder of the day.

From Frayle Muerto I visited, on my return to Rosario, Cañada de Gomez, where my friend M—— lived, who had been my fellow-passenger, and also K——, the owner of the successful horse. There were a number of Englishmen settled in this neighbourhood, and although none of them were making money, still they were reported to be holding their own and making some progress. Large tracts of land had been broken by the plough, and profitable wheat crops were expected to result. Hitherto these crops had not been remunerative, but still these young fellows persevered, I regret to say, finally only to be disappointed in the results. K—— had a very fine farm, and worked wonderfully hard. His house was far better than any I had yet visited. He was going in largely for improving the breed of horses. He had selected some good brood mares in Buenos Ayres, and had imported one or two stock horses from England; and I have since heard that he has been successful, and that he is now doing a large business. In this way, no doubt, a good trade will some day be done

in the exportation of horses to Europe, and already considerable attention is beginning to be directed towards this branch of industry. At present, something like 200,000 good and bad mares are annually slaughtered at the "saladeros" for their hides, just as recklessly as sheep were formerly used for fuel. If the indiscriminate slaughter of mares were prevented by appointing inspectors to pick out from the "saladeros" the better class, and buy them at ten paper dollars above cost price, no doubt in a few years the pampas of Buenos Ayres would become one of the finest horse farms in the world; and there is no reason why 100,000 horses should not be imported annually, say at a cost of £10 per head, which in Europe would probably bring £40. At the same time a finer class of horses, from the improvement of breed, could fairly be expected to realise a much higher price.

M—— had been a very experimental farmer—he had tried sheep on hard camp, that is, on long stringy grass, and cattle on short rabbit grass, but both, of course, had been a failure; he had also imported at great expense Angora goats, which, had they succeeded, he intended crossing with sheep, but they, too, had been unsuccessful, so he had now turned his attention to agriculture, and was busy modelling a machine for taking the ears off corn, leaving standing the stock or straw, which is useless in the camps, but the one implement which he had ordered according to his own pattern had been a failure, and with persevering energy he was now busy on another improved model. I enjoyed a capital day's shooting with M——, at large partridge, a bird larger than our pheasant, which is very plentiful in these camps. These curious birds have but three flights, and if pursued on a fast horse can be easily taken alive after the third rise.

"Las Rosas," for that was the name of K——'s estancia, was a very pleasant house to stop at, and visitors were

requested to amuse themselves in any and every way they chose, but the "patron," or master, must not be disturbed from his daily rounds. It was while endeavouring to follow out these regulations that I had my first introduction to a "skunk." Riding across camp one day accompanied by a retriever from the estancia, one of these beautiful little animals crossed my path. It sat up looking at me, and as I had never seen one in the living state before, I thought if possible to secure a specimen. The dog had, immediately on seeing it, collapsed as it were, and refused to go near, so poising my "rebenque," the handle of which was loaded, in the air, and taking aim, I let fly, but only to see the active little animal run away unhurt, and escape into a hole close by. I now dismounted to pick up my whip, and rode home; but oh! horror! the whole air around me seemed to be impregnated with the very quintescence of all the abominable odours in Christendom, and every yard I rode it seemed to accompany me. When I reached the house K—— was waiting to receive me, and on my approach at once detected the smell, and called out "A skunk! a skunk! you have been killing a skunk!" I told him at once of my adventure with the "pretty little animal," which I now found really was a skunk, an animal having the power of ejecting this powerful odour, which forms its only protection; the dog, probably from experience, knew the disagreeableness of attacking a skunk, and it was my "rebenque" alone which had been inoculated. This, fortunately, we discovered to be the case, otherwise I should have been unable to attend dinner, which was awaiting my return, as my presence would, under the circumstances, have been anything but appetising; as it was I was obliged to use plenty of soap, water, and eau de Cologne before I ventured amongst the company.

"Las Rosas" was the head or parent establishment in

the Cañada de Gomez Camps, and there once a month the English clergyman, Mr. C——, from Rosario, paid a visit and held a service. He was a very pleasant companion, and all were glad to see him. K—— always sent a horse to meet him at the station, about fifteen miles distant. One very warm day, as usual when he was expected, a horse was sent—this time the evening before—and the servant left him to be given to Mr. C—— on demand. Now it happened that the horse was very thin, and after riding about half way, Mr. C——, being a kind-hearted and Christian clergyman, got off to walk and ease his jaded steed. All went on very well for a time—the horse walked so quietly by his side that at length he let go the reins. As soon as the animal felt this, he walked a little faster, until at length he got a yard ahead of the unsuspecting parson, who, after a little, thinking he had given a sufficient rest to his steed, prepared to re-mount so as to reach in time the estancia, where an eager flock had congregated to meet him, but directly he attempted to approach the horse, it seemed to divine his intentions, and would move on a little faster. In this away poor Mr. C—— tried every artifice—calling upon the obdurate animal in the fondest and most coaxing terms to wo! wo! now trying to steal upon it from one side, now from the other, but on each occasion only to see the beast get nimbly out of his reach; the teasing animal all the while filling his mouth from each tempting morsel on the road-side as he passed along, for he never attempted to leave the road or part company altogether from his would-be rider. At length the poor parson, utterly worn out, gave it up in despair, and walked on quietly to the estancia behind his horse, and as he approached the house some three hours behind his time, the indignation of his sorely-tried congregation may be imagined, when they saw him coming leisurely, walking behind his horse, and I am afraid

when he afterwards told his story he got more "chaff" than sympathy; but under the hospitable roof of K—— he was soon supplied with something far more substantial than this, in the form of a "refresco" and a good dinner, which it is to be hoped soon banished all his wrath, and renewed in him a subdued and forgiving spirit.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Reflections on the Northern Camps—Success—Wear and tear upon stable horses—A "mirage"—My first Christmas in the pampas—The runaway apprentice—A dangerous district—Great cruelty to a boy—The rescue—The prospects of the apprentice brighten—Christians and countrymen—South American tigers—Life of animals in the primeval forests—President Sarmiento—Great preparations—Mounting the Household Brigade—The whole city astir—The ball—Beaux and belles—"Swallow-tails"—"Till daylight did appear"—The fair and musical Rosarinas—Me Gustan Todas.

MY visit to the Northern Camps, pleasant as it had been, supplied me with much matter for reflection. There could be no doubt about the grandeur of these expansive camps, and their capabilities for pasturage or agricultural purposes; but, notwithstanding this, I could not gather from what had come under my notice that success had been achieved by any of the settlers, and I could not help looking upon the Frayle Muerto Camps at all events as, according to the common expression, "done for," at least for many years to come; and those of Cañada de Gomez presented almost as gloomy a picture. It is true that at Las Rosas some little sign of life existed, but this might, in a great measure, be attributed to the extra exertions of K——, and the success of his horse breeding. The camps no doubt were fit for cattle, but as yet this had not been tried, and all energy was being directed to the wheat crops. I have already mentioned, that cattle, in my opinion, was all that was re-

quired to make these settlements at Cañada de Gomez remunerative. Wheat I could never believe in, grown for the grain alone. As to Frayle Muerto, stock raising was all "moonshine" until the Government were strong and determined enough to contend with Indian raids; and such a prospect did not appear likely soon to be realised.

My business was a great success, but I had had too much experience to be dazzled by a moment's sunshine; and I felt that upon the success of these settlers must be built my prospects for the future, for I was to a great extent dependent on my camp customers.

I found the wear and tear upon my ordinary stable horses very great; no flesh and blood could stand the knocking about they were obliged to undergo—galloped all day—as I have said, often without food or water. So I was constantly obliged to purchase new animals, and turn out the old ones. When this became necessary I generally visited some estancia known to have horses for sale, and on these occasions I had long gallops across country which gave me a great insight into camp life. I do not know anything more beautiful than a ride across camp at daybreak on a fine morning when a good "mirage" sets in. The scenery on these occasions is unsurpassed; beautiful islands, as it were, reflected from the "montes" all about, will be seen as perfect and real as in nature, while every rise in the ground will be as truly portrayed in the picture as they literally appear in mountainous lake scenery; and it is difficult at first to believe the whole is not a reality. I remember on the first occasion this wonderful panorama was presented to my view saying to my companion, as we advanced towards what I felt sure was a lake, "Had we not better turn our horses, so as to avoid the water by going round it?"

When Christmas Day arrived I paid the promised visit to my friends, the B——'s, at Roldan. I went by train,

as I had brought a box sent to them by relatives in England, containing good things for Christmas. I was to be met at the station by a trap, and it was while awaiting the arrival of this conveyance that I met a runaway apprentice, of whom I shall have hereafter to speak. The poor boy was sitting on the ground some little distance from the railway; he was unable to proceed any farther, being foot-sore and tired. His story was a not uncommon one. He had conceived a passion for the sea, had been gratified, and bound apprentice, but so bad was the treatment he received from his captain that he determined to run away at the first port they came to. This happened to be Rosario; and he had wandered through the camps, he said, for two days and nights, subsisting on a scrap of bread he had placed in his pocket before starting on his perilous journey. He now begged me not to take him back to the cruel captain; rather, he said, would he die! Of course, I assured him I would do no such thing, but that he should come with me and have his feet bathed and his Christmas dinner. His face brightened up at this prospect, and no doubt a ray of hope and sunshine stole upon his desolate heart. Poor young fellow! he little knew at the time the dangers he had braved in being thus alone and unprotected in the camps of Santa Fè, and when he did find it out it was too late, for I was unwittingly about to lead him to his grave.

Roldan was a very bad neighbourhood; bands of assassins and murderers infested it, and only a few days previously I had read in the native papers an account of a dreadful act of cruelty that had been practised upon a poor country boy who was caught by a body of these strolling murderers. Taken from his horse, and just for diversion, and probably to see how far human nature could endure pain, they flayed his hands, feet, and part of his body; and, leaving his horse fastened within his reach,

retired to see how he would manage—being as they rightly surmised now prevented from either riding, walking, or crawling. The suffering wretch made many attempts in his frenzy to escape from his tormentors, but all to no purpose; and when these ruffians were sufficiently amused they returned, scored and mutilated his face, and left him to die or be discovered by some passer-by. The poor creature did, however, manage to crawl to the side of the railway, and the same evening the driver of the train, attracted by his cries, stopped the engine, when he was taken up and conveyed to the hospital of Rosario, where I ascertained afterwards he was "doing well."

Yet these desperadoes, who were known to the boy, were allowed to go at large without any effort being made by the Government to arrest the perpetrators, which could have easily been done.

On our arrival at the estancia my friends were very kind to the poor boy I had brought with me, and told him, if he cared to make himself useful about the place, he would always find something to do, and should afterwards have charge of a flock of sheep. He was of course delighted. His prospects had, indeed, been dull on that dreary Christmas morning when he awakened from his weary rest upon the wild and cheerless pampas; but now it was different; his clothes had been changed, his feet bathed, and he was about to partake of good old Christmas cheer amongst—new friends certainly—but Christians and countrymen. What would the cruel captain have said had he seen all this? I passed a very pleasant day with my friends at Roldan Estancia. The elder of the two brothers was a great sportsman; he had spent a deal of time tiger shooting on the islands in the Parana. These islands are teaming with game of all sorts—some of them being very extensive. The animal com-

monly called the "tiger" of Tropical and Southern America, is properly the "jaguar" (*Felis onça*), and I believe, although I have never seen proof of it, that under favourable circumstances, this powerful carnivore attains a size and power but little inferior to that of the huge monster of Bengal.

In that vivid chapter on the "Aspects of Nature," in which Baron Humboldt describes the nocturnal life of animals in the primeval forests, there occur the following notices of the jaguar, taken from journals "written on the spot:"—

"A striking evidence of the impenetrability of particular parts of the forest is afforded by a trait, related by an Indian, of the habits of the large American tiger, or panther-like jaguar. While in the Llanos of Varinas and the Meta, and in the Pampas of Buenos Ayres, the introduction of European cattle, horses, and mules has enabled the beasts of prey to find an abundant subsistence—so that since the first discovery of America their numbers have increased exceedingly in those extended grassy steppes; their congeners in the dense forests around the sources of the Orinoco lead a very different and far less easy life. In a bivouac near the junction of the Cassiquiare with the Orinoco, we had the misfortune of losing a large dog to which we were much attached, as the most faithful and affectionate companion of our wanderings. Being still uncertain whether he had actually been killed by the jaguars, a faint hope of recovering him induced us, in returning from the mission of Esmeralda, through the swarms of musquitoes by which it is infested, to spend another night at the spot where we had so long sought him in vain. We heard the cries of the jaguar, probably the very individual which we suspected of the deed, extremely near to us; and as the clouded sky made astronomical observations impossible, we passed part of

the night in making our interpreter repeat to us the accounts given by our native boat's crew of the tigers of the country. The black jaguar was, they said, not unfrequently found there; it is the largest and most bloodthirsty variety, with the black spots scarcely distinguishable on its deep brown skin. It lives at the foot of the mountains of Maraguaca and Unturan. One of the Indians of the Durimund tribe then related to us that jaguars are often led, by their love of wandering and by their rapacity, to lose themselves in such impenetrable parts of the forest that they can no longer hunt along the ground, and live instead in the trees, where they are the terror of the families of monkeys and the kinkajou (*Cercoleptes caudivolvulus*)."

B—— gave us a most interesting account of his experiences; and in this manner was spent my first Christmas in the pampas.

Some time afterwards the younger brother came to Rosario to spend a few days at the caballeriza with me. President Sarmiento was about to pay a visit to the city, and great preparations were being made to receive him. I had already made arrangements to mount a squadron of cavalry of "The Household Brigade," which was to accompany him; a number of horses had also been engaged by his staff and attendants, and I had to provide one for the President himself.

On his arrival the whole city was astir. My horses looked splendid—in fact I hardly knew them, they looked such swells when fully accoutred for service, and their martial riders might well be proud. A grand ball took place in the evening, in a large and spacious building; and here for the first time since my arrival, an opportunity was afforded me for seeing something of the youth and beauty of the place I lived in. The room presented a most creditable appearance, being beautifully decorated and lit

with wax. I was introduced to the "illustrious party" by our Consul, and was told by the President that my horse which he had ridden in the morning was in every way satisfactory. I danced a great deal, notwithstanding the heat of the weather, and was very pleased indeed with my partners; some of whom, although they had not "eyes of most unholy blue," made up for that deficiency by those of "the most wicked black." They were dressed in all the style and fashion, or in a very fair imitation of it, of the old world; but this was more than could have been said of the gentlemen, by whom the "swallow-tails" were ignored, except by the "Ingleses," and the greater swells about the President. A great many "camp-men" dressed at my place, and afterwards left their clothes to be taken home, or put bye for them, for a ball was rather uncommon; and I believe half-a-dozen swallow-tailed coats were amongst the articles found on the premises when I eventually retired from the stables.

Dancing was kept up all night with spirit, and it was only when daylight forced its way through the windows and curtains—for shutters are unknown—that the dancers were reluctantly obliged to separate; and I have no doubt many a black-eyed señorita long remembered the President's ball, and had a deal to answer for. Round dances, as with us, were of course the most in vogue; but fast waltzes and galops were unknown, very slow polkas being substituted.

The fair Rosarinas are very musical, and it is indeed a poor establishment that cannot boast of its piano, from which the soothing strains of music can be heard at all hours of the day (except during siesta) and evening; sometimes the music and the singing attempted is classical, but, as a rule, it is of a very simple description, generally some favourite polka or other dance music, but there is one never-failing strain of tune and song, which

may be heard issuing from the open windows of half the houses in the great cities of the Republic; it is hummed by the maidens, and whistled by the small boys; it is a favourite with the old, the young, the aged and the infirm —it may be heard in the President's palace and in the humble rancho—upon the piano and upon the guitar. I cannot give the words, as my memory fails the occasion, but this is the burden of the song.*

"Me gustan todas, me gustan todas,
Me gustan todas in general;
Pero esta rubia, pero esta rubia,
Pero esta rubia, me gustan mas."

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* Literally—
"I like everybody, I like everybody, I like everybody in general,
But this blonde, but this blonde, but this blonde I like the most."

CHAPTER XXX.

Departure of the President—Dinner with a friend—Edward Skinner's story—Murder of Bald and Tait—Agitation—Breaking the news—The effect—Special instructions—A sad and dreary night—Nearer and nearer—We reach the estancia—Yes, truly all was darkness—A shocking sight—A disagreeable duty—Superstition and fear—In charge of the estancia—The approaching thunderstorm—Whitewashed walls—An ugly customer—Fled—The pursuit—The excuse—Peals of thunder—Crying for vengeance—Smelling blood—In full gallop—A great loss—Broken slumber—Daylight—Johnny A. of Pavon—The "asado"—On the horizon—Danger ahead—Plans of defence—The "Commissario" and his men—Ave Maria—The prisoner—A notorious assassin—The hero of an adventure—A bad countenance—"Staked out"—Novel mode of examination—The confession—The guilt established—Relief—A trap—Scouring the country—A recognition—The sentence carried out—Released by the rabble—*Sic transit gloria mundi.*

THE President had taken his departure, and all the balls and dinners and speeches were over, and the city of Rosario had once more settled down into its normal state of quietude, when my friend B——, who had been staying with me, announced his intention of returning next day to the camp. "He had," he explained, "been long enough from home, and it was his brother's turn now, he generally going from home upon his shooting excursion about this season. I must dine with him to-night for a change." Of course, I could offer no objection to his suggestion, and at dinner-hour, therefore, we repaired to his hotel. When dinner was finished, having some business to attend to, I begged to be excused from sitting over wine in the cool "patio," and, rising from the table, said "Hasta loego!"

—until later on—and left the hotel to return to the caballeriza. I had not proceeded far, however, when I was stopped by a young man named Skinner, whom I recognised as a neighbour of my friends at Roldan, and whom I had met at Christmas with them. He had only sandals on his feet, and wore native "cherrypas," or trousers, and a plain linen shirt. His manner was very excited, and when he attempted to speak he burst into tears. I was much alarmed, and endeavoured to soothe him. "Oh, Mr. B——," he said, "where is his brother? Let me go to him at once; they have both been murdered." "Both been murdered!" I repeated; "both been mur——" I could not finish the sentence. "Speak out man. What is the meaning of all this?" He did speak out, poor fellow, and this was his horrible tale—the recollection of which even now makes my very blood freeze.

He, Skinner, had spent the preceding evening at B——'s estancia, where he had met two "Gauchos," who had come to buy "capones" wethers. He had left at nine P.M., and at this hour the "Gauchos" were preparing to make their beds in an out-house. Next day, not seeing either Mr. B—— or his boy Tait about the place, Skinner had gone, out of curiosity, to see what had become of them. When he entered the premises, to use his own words, "an awful sensation crept over him." The two brothers, when at home, lived by themselves with but one attendant, namely, the boy Tait, whom I had picked up on Christmas day. One side of the door was closed, and a strong stench came from the inside. He felt he hardly dare enter, and still he was irresistably drawn forward. He took one glance round, just one, that was enough. Before him lay stretched on the floor the dead and mutilated body of his good friend and neighbour, R. B——, and he had no doubt that poor Tait had shared the same sad fate. But he did not wait to see;

he had galloped off, without pulling rein, to break the news to the brother whom he knew was staying with me." This was Edward Skinner's story, bad enough, truly, but not the sort of news to break roughly to a fond and sensitive brother.

I was now in turn very much agitated, but endeavoured to control my feelings as best I could, and to consider what was most advisable to do under the circumstances. I determined to keep Skinner with me, while I sent a messenger to fetch my friend from the hotel, when he had quite finished. As he entered my apartment he was laughing. "So you have had some more horses stolen; was it 'ugly Germans' this time?" My messenger had said, in case of his noticing my emotion, that more horses were missing. "No," I replied. "B——, my man, I wish that were all, but I am afraid it is something worse this time." "Worse, this time! Why, what do you mean? Have they smashed your best dog-cart?" "No; worse than that. Your brother is ill." "Oh, that's not unusual. B——b's chest is not strong, and he is often a little out of sorts." "But," I continued, "he is very, very bad indeed—could not be worse." That was enough; brotherly instinct told him he was no more, and jumping up wildly from his chair, he exclaimed, "He is dead!" "Yes," I said, "the poor fellow is dead; he was murdered last night, and most probably Tait also." This was too much for the poor fellow to bear. He called out frantically for his horse to be saddled at once; he pulled out his revolver, and threatened to shoot the groom if he delayed another moment; but my orders had been given that nothing was be done without special instructions from me. I had sent for a surgeon to accompany us to the camp,* and had given orders for coffins to follow at day-

* To examine the wounds, with a view to evidence, or in order to trace the the murderers.

break—this was absolutely necessary in a warm climate—but I determined that he, the brother, should not set out until he had realised the worst, and become more calm. It was a sad and dreary night as poor E. B——, Dr. Covernton, E. Skinner, and myself, galloped through the pitch dark camp towards the now desolate estancia—that house which only a short time before had appeared so cheery, when we pledged our own and our friends healths on Christmas night.

As we drew nearer and nearer the scene of the murder, our hearts beat fast at the prospect which was about to meet our view. The brother, E. B——, had shown no signs of weakness during the ride; the one idea uppermost in his mind was revenge—revenge upon the murderers of his favourite brother. At length the estancia was reached; a moment was required to secure the horses; then the house was entered. All was darkness inside; yes, truly all was darkness. A candle was procured. No words can convey any idea of the shocking sight presented to us when the light shone on that room. Stretched on the ground, near the doorway, was poor R. B——, his body literally hacked to pieces—stabbed in the face and in the body, the muscles of his arms severed to the bone, and his legs hamstrung. In the next room the poor boy Tait was discovered. The house consisted of two rooms, with but one door leading from the house, and the windows being barred with iron—a custom in the camps—thus shutting off all chance of escape. He likewise had been shockingly and barbarously treated, being covered with stabs and ripped open, the entrails being torn from him. It was, indeed, a most sickening and horrible scene, more than the poor brother could bear to look on a second time, and he was obliged to be taken away.

A very disagreeable duty now devolved upon the doctor—that of examining the wounds. It was ascertained,

beyond all doubt, that they had been inflicted by the "facons," or long knives of these "Gauchos." I shall not attempt to describe the horrors of preparing these poor fellows for their last resting place. Suffice it to say, that a more sad or heartrending scene it has never been my lot to witness.

Previous to the removal of the bodies it was necessary to make arrangements for some one to remain and take charge of the estancia, where two large flocks of sheep and a good deal of other property remained. The "puestaeros," or shepherds, who lived in "puestas," or huts, on the camp near the estancia, had refused to come near the place since the murder had been committed, as the "corrales," or sheep-pens, were close to the house, and no amount of money could induce a native to remain and take charge of the premises for a day or two, so high ran superstition and fear. Under these circumstances I volunteered to remain myself, and when my companions set out for Rosario I was left sole occupant of the estancia. I had a dreary time of it for another whole day and night; but I had plenty to occupy me, such as getting the sheep together and attending to the corrales and other duties during the first two or three hours—for sleep was out of the question. When I had made all secure—that is, put the sheep in their pens, for a heavy thunderstorm was approaching—I returned to the house to put it into some kind of order. It was in a sad state; everywhere were marks of blood, the whitewashed walls were bespattered all over, and even the sack of camp biscuits, which was kept in a corner of the room, had been saturated, and it was with some difficulty I could pick one out, with which to appease my hunger; for it must be recollected I had not tasted food since the previous evening, and had been riding and working all night. When I had nearly succeeded in getting things somewhat in

order, I heard footsteps approaching, and it being an unusual thing for any one to approach on foot, I walked to the door to see who it could be, when I saw a very ruffianly-looking "Gaucho," bootless, and noiselessly approaching the house. On perceiving me he seemed astonished, but, saluting with the usual "Buenos dias, Señor," took a hasty step towards me, and quickly pulling a long "facon" from his side, would, no doubt, have stabbed me to the heart, had I not at the same instant fired my revolver so close to his face that the fire must have scorched him, and he dropped the "facon," and fled.

I quickly mounted my horse and pursued, nor did I lose sight of him until he was a considerable distance from the house. He made many appeals for the restitution of his "facon," saying, for excuse, that he was merely a neighbour come to see if the family were at home, and that observing a revolver in my hand, he thought my intentions were warlike, &c. But my heart was proof against these appeals, and I kept the "facon" as a trophy.

The thunderstorm had now broken overhead, and the rain descended in torrents; every peal of thunder seemed to be crying for vengeance on the murderers of poor B—— and Tait, and I felt sure the visitor who had just left me, if he was not the actual murderer, knew a good deal about the terrible deed, and I was almost sorry I had not aimed at him. My poor horse was suffering a good deal all this time in the rain. I had secured him by a long "lasso," so that he could graze, but now that the rain had commenced he looked so utterly miserable, that I brought him into the house. No sooner had he entered the room, than he commenced to snort, and shake nervously. He had smelt the blood, and in an instant had turned round, and plunging out of the door, "lasso" and all—for I could hold on no

longer—was in full gallop over the camps, and it was many months' before I saw him again.*

This was a great loss to me indeed, and rendered my already dreary position far more so. I was now very sleepy, having been awake more than thirty-six hours, and during the last twenty-four I had been working hard and living upon biscuits. So fastening the door well, and leaving the windows open, thinking the least stir would awake me, I laid my head down to rest upon the bed so lately occupied by my ill-fated friend, with two revolvers by my side. My rest was indeed broken, not with anything from without,—I should not have much minded that, for I felt that I could fight wickedly, and would rather like it. But my dreams were of the most painful description, and when at last day made its appearance, and with it the clear blue sky and sunshine, which always succeeds a thunderstorm in this climate, I was truly glad to leave my troubled pillow, and seek the cool and refreshing morning air. The sheep were all right. I had secured them in a most unmistakeable way, so that they could not possibly break out, and I could see across the distant camps, from the direction of Rosario, a horseman approach, whom, as he drew near, I recognised as a friend of mine, Johnny A——, of Pavon, a countryman. A—— had good-naturedly ridden out at daylight to relieve me. I was very glad to see him and to have some one to speak to. "He had come," he said, "to breakfast with me, and had brought his pockets full of hot rolls." His first business was to catch a lamb and sacrifice it—he was an old estanciero and sheep farmer, and understood these matters wells. An "asado," or roast, was soon prepared. What an excellent roast that was, prepared over the clear

* When staying with Don Juan Armstrong at Pavon some time afterwards, where this horse was born, he came galloping up to the house one day without a rider, and carrying with him a saddle, which, I presume, he brought as a peace-offering.

embers of a camp-fire. While we were thus appeasing the cravings of the inward man, we perceived on the horizon a body of horsemen approaching the estancia, and as they came closer we could distinguish them to be "Gauchos." Here then was an explanation of the reluctance on the part of the "puestaeros" to remain in charge of the house. They had expressed an opinion that the "murderers, reinforced," might return to sack the place, and to all appearance their fears were about to be realised. Our plan of defence and attack was soon laid. We would permit the advancing party to approach within a few yards of the doorway, without exhibiting any signs of occupation, and would then fire at them from our revolvers, and if we succeeded in routing them, we could use rifles, which we placed in reserve for long shots, as they retreated over the "camps."

But this warm reception which we had so skilfully planned, was, I regret to say, not destined to become practice. I say regret, because I felt very warlike just at the moment, and so did my friend J—— A——; but when they had reached within shooting distance, we found them to be the "Commissario" and his men, that is, the resident magistrate and his rural police; and as these officials are merely a kind of militia police, and do not wear any uniform and are merely armed with lance, which is carried half-concealed under the "poncho," it is impossible to recognise them at any distance.

Upon their arrival at the "estancia," and after the customary salute, "Ave Maria," followed by the invitation to dismount and enter the house—a strict matter of etiquette throughout the "camps"—the officer, Cordoba, walked in, and in reply to an invitation to join our meal, took his place at the table, leaving the men to guard a capture he had made that morning. During the progress of our meal, it was explained by the officer that the

prisoner outside was a notorious assassin who had escaped from the frontier, that he had murdered a medical gentleman and his only daughter, the sole occupants of a house not very far off, some five years previously, under circumstances of great brutality; and he concluded by asking us, "if we would like to see him?" He himself, he explained, had called in order to gather some particulars of the late murder. We now proceeded to interview the prisoner; he was fastened hand and foot to a stake driven into the ground, and set in the midst of the soldiers or police, who were dividing the remainder of our roast lamb amongst themselves. Directly I saw the prisoner, I exclaimed, "Why, that is the very individual, my visitor, the hero of the adventure yesterday, and whose 'facon' I showed you. Could it be possible he knows all about this murder also?" The prisoner's appearance certainly was enough to hang him at any moment had he belonged to any other race than the "Gaucho," and I shall never forget the bloodthirsty look he favoured me with when our gaze met. However, the miserable wretch was not permitted to keep us long in doubt, for by the direction of the officer his examination was about to be proceeded with. Several pegs, like tent pegs or stakes, were prepared; next some raw hide strips, such as are usually found at all estancias, being used for many purposes. These raw hide lashings being well soaked in water, the prisoner was "staked" out in the sun, stretched to his fullest extent from head, ankles and wrists; the action of the sun soon contracts the lashings, and then the sufferings of the wretch commence. "Speak," or "die," is now the command of the soldier who stands over him with lance pointed at throat, which he has punctured till the blood flows. Now he speaks and confesses his guilt, the torture he is undergoing is too much for him; every word he utters is carefully noted by more than one eager listener—what a

dreadful confession is his,—"he and a companion had murdered poor 'Don Roberto' and Tait." Yes, they had gone to his house for the very purpose, pretending they were buyers of "capones," and knowing he had recently sold his wool, and thinking the money must be in the house, they resolved on the murder. "They wanted," he said in extenuation, "to give an entertainment to their friends upon the ensuing Sunday, and could hit on no better plan for the purpose of securing funds, than this of murdering the 'Gringo Inglis.'" "His companion," he said, "had done more towards murdering Don Roberto than himself, but he had killed the boy unassisted, as by this time his companion had quite enough to do; for had they known the difficulty and opposition they were destined to contend with, they would never have attempted the deed. Don Roberto had fought bravely; and had succeeded in wresting a revolver from them, with which he had inflicted a wound in the shoulder of his murderer, which individual might be found at a 'pulperia,' not many leagues distant."

This was enough. The prisoner was released and brought into the house, where he pointed out the scene of every incident; thus clearly establishing his guilt. The officer and his men now took their prisoner to Rosario, for a reward had been offered by the President of 5,000 dollars paper, for the arrest of the murderer or murderers; and thus the accomplice was permitted to escape for the present.

Later in the evening I was relieved by others from Rosario, sent by B—— and J. A——., and I myself returned to town.

After considerable delay, and several attempts on the part of well-meaning people to get the prisoner's sentence of death reprieved—the last of which was an attempt by the "belles" of Rosario to draw my friend B—— and myself

into a trap, which would have resulted in a reprieve, viz., asking, as the accusers, for his life—the last dread sentence of the law was carried out, and he was shot in the "plaza," in the presence of upwards of five thousand indignant foreigners.

Meanwhile, B—— had been scouring the country in search of the slayers of his poor brother; and had succeeded in tracing and arresting several suspicious characters, but they turned out not to be the right parties, although they were notorious assassins, and it is only a pity the President did not have them all shot at the same time.

The other murderer was afterwards recognised by young Skinner, and subsequently arrested; but during a revolution, and while awaiting his trial, he was amongst a number of other prisoners, all very bad characters, released from the "quartel" by the rabble, and he was never afterwards re-arrested.

"Sic transit gloria mundi."

CHAPTER XXXI.

Revulsion of feeling—The fact was—Feathers in the cap—Gauchos and their facons—The sooner the better—Governmental wisdom—The Prensa's story—The President's horse—Wooed and won—A visit to Cardoba—Ancient Jesuit settlements—Quartz reefs—A portable "crusher"—Carnival in Rosario—Water-throwing—The runaway horse—Broken ribs—An old friend pronounced incurable—Yellow fever in Buenos Ayres—Cholera—Dr. J. Collis Browne's chlorodyne—Running the blockade—A dilemma—A well-known creek—Nicholas Hogan's house—Made up for the night—The everlasting "cocktail"—The morning start—Mid-day—A thieving musician—Caught in the act—A man hunt—The result—"Pulperias"—The pass—The blockade run—St. Nicholas—The return—Another shocking murder—*Horresco referens.*

THE murder of poor B—— and Tait caused a considerable revulsion of feeling amongst the foreign population, and a good deal of ill-feeling was engendered between the natives and the settlers in the country. The fact was, murder and assassination were looked upon by the "Gaucho" faction as rather a good institution, and were winked at by the authorities, who were often related to these ruffians, so that deeds of this description were rather feathers in the cap of the perpetrator, and did not at all debar them from the association of their fellow "Gauchos." I do not say that all the race are capable of committing cold-blooded deeds; but they are a decidedly bloodthirsty lot, and few of them have much hesitation in using the knife if they are a little put out or annoyed, and for this reason I have often thought that the more revolutions which took place in the Republic the better for

those engaged in these struggles for supremacy, Nearly all belong to the "Gaucho" class, and the sooner they succeed in exterminating one another the better, thus making room for industrious Irishmen and other foreigners, who would really take an interest in developing their magnificent country.

The Government showed some wisdom in ordering the convict on this occasion to be shot, and this decision had a salutary effect to a certain extent, but there is no doubt he never would have been shot had it not been for the fact of the President's late visit to Rosario, and the strong representations on the subject, which were made by B—— and his friends; but in a short time murder and assassination were as rife as ever, and life in the camps as insecure, and if one can judge by the native papers, which continue to reach me from Buenos Ayres, the "Gaucho" is as handy with his knife at the present day as ever. The *Buenos Ayres Standard* is responsible for the following :—

"The *Prensa* reports a frightful affair at Junin on Sunday last at a race. A number of 'Gauchos' were drinking in a pulperia, when an old fellow named Rosas, who was drunk, drew his 'facon' and attacked one Monge, lieutenant of National Guards. Monge had nothing but a whip, with which, however he knocked the old 'Gaucho' down, and took the 'facon' from him. Another 'Gaucho,' Martinez, began to provoke Monge, who, however, took him coolly; when a 'Gaucho,' named Ochoa, took up the latter's defence; declared he was a honourable man, and if any one present thought otherwise he had only to step forward and fight. Martinez at once replied 'Come out to the patio.' Ochoa had nothing but a 'rebenque,' but he went out, saying 'entre toritos no hay cornada' to those who told him he would be killed, as Martinez had a most formidable 'facon.' In almost the first moment of the

fight Martinez received a blow of the whip on his head, but he sprang at Ochoa, drove the 'facon' through his throat, and by a swift movement, absolutely cut his adversary's head half off while he was still on his feet! Lieutenant Monge, seeing Martinez leaning over his fallen adversary, said, 'Don't strike him while down.' On this, Martinez turned on him saying 'I will send you on a journey also,' and drove the 'facon' through his body, wounding him fearfully. A police sergeant then drew his sword and attacked the murderer, but instead of cutting him down at once kept beating him with the flat of his sword, as if he despised his powers. This infuriated Martinez, and he rushed at the sergeant, decapitating him as he had Ochoa. The assassin then wiped his bloody weapon, saying 'Fate pursues me,' subsequently mounting his horse and riding away with a 'Good evening, gentlemen,' to the terror-stricken spectators. The sergeant and Ochoa were killed on the spot, but Monge still lives. The assassin has escaped."

There was now a great demand for the "President's horse," that is the horse I had lent the President during his visit to Rosario. "Carnival" was approaching fast, and as that season is a great time for "passearing" there was a good deal of competition among the "beaux" as to who should possess the coveted quadruped, and eventually he was knocked down to "an ugly German," who, no doubt, sought to make up for his deficiency of good looks by rivalling his neighbours in the way of horseflesh. I only regretted I had not several "President's horses" to dispose of. I ought to have mounted him on a different animal each day. However the German's was not altogether an unprofitable investment, for he wooed and won his fair señorita, and I have no doubt it was the "President's horse" did it. Let us hope that he had not to pay too dearly for it after all.

About this time I was induced to visit the city of Cordoba, which city is connected by railway with Rosario. I did not know any one there, nor were there a great many English settlers in that district; but it was a pleasant change for a day or two, to find one's self amongst the "sierras" after gazing at the pampas for a length of time. The city of Cordoba is an ancient Jesuit settlement, and many interesting relics of the fathers and their churches can be seen there. Cordoba is on the high road to rich mining and agricultural districts, extending along the foot of the Andes, in the direction of San Juan and Mendoza, and consequently on the high road to Chili and the West Coast. It was said that gold existed in quartz reefs some miles from the city, and a few enterprising Englishmen had endeavoured to work the mines, but in the absence of powerful machinery their efforts were fruitless. Indeed it was attempted to work it with one small "quartz crusher," which had been specially constructed in pieces of portable weights and dimensions, and was carried upon muleback with unflagging perseverance up these rugged "sierras," and actually did some work. But it proved insufficient, and the works were finally abandoned. I afterwards travelled with an engineer who had gone to the country specially to report upon the value of these mines, and he told me that if all the gold was extracted, it would not pay for the making of the necessary road for conveyance of plant and machinery.

Upon my arrival in Rosario carnival was in full swing. This was a busy time with me, as numbers of horses were required to carry those engaged in the amusements of this great feast. All business is suspended during carnival, and the great object in life seems for the moment to be pleasure. Grotesque and fancy costumes, "bal masques," political and religious caricatures, water throwing, flour besmearing, scent bedaubing, and many other amusements

suggested by and pleasing to the fancy of the populace are carried on without intermission for several days. The water throwing is a very silly and disagreeable performance; it may suit natives very well, who are not in the habit of every-day ablutions, but for the ordinary Englishman who "tubs" every morning, it is as unnecessary as it is disagreeable; however, for those who enjoy it, let it remain amongst the cherished customs of the land, but I think I may be excused for saying a hard word against it when I explain that it cost me a number of doctor's fees, for the setting of four ribs, which were badly broken at my first carnival.

I was driving my dog-cart round the town, viewing the processions and amusements, accompanied by a couple of friends, when my horse took fright—having had a bucket of water pitched from the roof of a house on his head, thus filling his ears—and started on his mad career at full speed through the crowded streets; my friends managed to jump off, but I, in fear and trembling that some one would be run over, made every exertion in my power to stop the runaway, which I finally succeeded in doing, at the expense of my ribs. Managing to jump out, or get out as quietly as I could, still retaining the reins, I pulled the the horse round the corner of a street, and got jammed between the wheel and the stout wooden corner post, which protects the angle of each street in Rosario. I was very seedy for a long time after that, and thus ended my first carnival. My ribs were very badly broken, and so was a very old hunting-watch, which was squeezed as flat as a pancake; and although in the course of time my ribs stuck together, my old friend was pronounced incurable.

Shortly after this Buenos Ayres was visited by that dreadful scourge, yellow fever, which committed such fearful havoc amongst its population, and strict quarantine was ordered upon all shipping and other communica-

tion between the two provinces, Buenos Ayres and Santa Fè. Rosario had been visited only two years before by cholera, at which time not only Rosario but the whole of the surrounding country was decimated by the plague, and the germ was supposed to have been imported; the authorities, therefore, did not neglect taking every precaution against another epidemic, although in a different form. An antidote had been found for cholera in Dr. J. Collis Browne's chlorodyne, which was used by Mr. Hutchinson, her Majesty's consul, himself a doctor, with the greatest success, in combination with brandy; in fact, nearly every case treated thus resulted in saving the life of the patient, and there are several Englishmen now at home who owe their life to Dr. J. Collis Browne's chlorodyne and Mr. Hutchinson. But no antidote had been discovered for yellow fever, and a large percentage of those attacked succumbed to this fatal disease.

During this period I was asked by a shipping agent in Rosario, if I would undertake to run the blockade overland, in order to dispatch a vessel from the Port of St. Nicholas, and to carry there in my dog-cart his clerk and a sack of gold. This I undertook to do, on condition that in the event of my being stopped, or caught in the act, my fine would be paid. Having arranged this preliminary I was ready for the road. I would not trust any of my men on a difficult job of this kind, requiring tact and caution. The distance was only sixteen leagues, or forty-eight miles, and this I could easily do in a day and a half, even driving over camp, for, of course, I must not select the beaten road. It would be necessary to cross the boundary river at some unfrequented spot where it was passable, and here was the whole difficulty; the best fords and the only bridge were well watched by soldiers.

I intended breaking the journey at an Irishman's estancia the first night. I well knew where to hit it off by road,

but in attempting to cross camp I missed it. We were late in starting from Rosario, and the consequence was we were left in the camp after sundown, and there being not much twilight we were rather in bad luck. Still I hoped to make it out before my horses (for I was driving tandem) had grown tired, for time was now the most important object with me, although it may not have been with my companion. At last a well-known creek was hit off, and I knew where I was, but it was pitch dark, and how was I to cross? I could plainly see the lights of what I well knew from the direction to be Nicholas Hogan's house, but how to get there, that was the question. I gave the reins to my companion, and followed the course of the creek for some distance. At last I discovered a cattle crossing. To return with the joyful news, gather up my reins, and steer my gallant steeds in safety over the ford was only the work of a short time; about as short a time as it afterwards took Mrs. Hogan to place a broil upon the pan, while her husband and myself saw the horses comfortably "made up" for the night.

Upon our return to the house the everlasting "cock-tail" was brewed, after which supper, and then we astonished our host and hostess by telling them we were about to run the blockade next day; but as they had every confidence in me, they made my companion, J. B——, who was a capital fellow, and just the man for the occasion, quite happy, by assuring him that I wascertain to succeed.

Next morning we made an early start, we wished to reach our destination in good time. Our host accompanied us some distance on horseback, and at mid-day we had halted at a "pulperia," on the borders of the river Saladillo, which separates Santa Fè from Buenos Ayres. Here we had something to eat, and while my companion went to examine the river unperceived, in order if possible

to discover a ford, I remained to guard our valuable freight. As usual, the "pulperia" was filled by a number of idle "Gauchos," who were gambling and drinking caña; one in particular attracted my attention, he was accompanying himself upon his guitar, while he warbled the airs of his native land. His companions were intent upon a game of cards. Every now and then one or other of them would pass him the dregs of their glasses to rinse his throat, after which he would invariably pipe up afresh; but the landlord would be each time one glass the less, for instead of returning it to the owner, or replacing it on the counter, it always disappeared under his "poncho." Once or twice he left the company, and went outside to see his horse, and hide away his stolen property, but always to return. He was assuming to be very much intoxicated. In one way or another he managed to get hold of half the glasses and cups in the "pulperia." At length he either became alarmed or else felt satisfied with the haul he had already made, for he left the premises. As soon as he had done so, I told the proprietor what I had seen, the truth of which immediately flashed upon him, and he, accompanied by the entire card party, set out in pursuit. In a moment the Gauchos were mounted, and in full chevy after the delinquent, who had made off as hard as he could on the first symptoms of suspicion. It required the united efforts of the whole party to head him; it was a most exciting chase, this man hunt, and when they returned triumphant, and came to search him, eight or ten drinking vessels of various sizes and description were found on him. I was informed that scenes of this kind were not uncommon, but as a rule the thief managed to escape. In most "pulperias," "Gauchos" are served through iron gratings, the doors are kept closely fastened, and the glass is handed to them through these bars. After the order has been paid for in this way, the "pulper," or store-keeper, only risks his

one glass or vessel, and saves his own throat. In reply to my inquiry, what would this thief have done with the stolen property, I was told that the first "pulpero" whose house he called at, would give him caña or cigarettes for them, though knowing perfectly well all the time that they had just been stolen from a neighbour. Such is society amongst the "Gauchos."

My friend returned after some time, having succeeded in finding a pass, and we now proceeded on our journey. Upon arriving at the spot selected, my leader was unharnessed, and the pass "walked." This was absolutely necessary, as the nature of the bottom must always be examined, when practicable, before venturing a dash across in a two-wheeled trap. It was found to be pretty deep, but perfectly safe, and my leader, now accustomed to the water, dashed gaily in, and in another moment the "blockade was run," and we were in the province of Buenos Ayres.

In the course of that afternoon we reached St. Nicholas, where my friend, the agent, took charge of his own sack of "ounces;" and when he rejoined me in the evening he informed me of his having arranged and completed all his business, and of his readiness to return next day.

There was nothing very remarkable about St. Nicholas. It possessed, like almost every other South American town I have visited, a large cathedral, which, upon inquiring for objects of interest, is invariably pointed out; and unless there happens to be a cemetery in the outskirts, the inhabitants seldom think their city possesses any other attraction likely to interest the stranger. St. Nicholas could also, like other cities of its kind in the Argentine Republic, boast of its "Plaza," its obelisk commemorative of independence, its narrow dirty streets and its abominable hotels, its wretched cooking, and its bad wines.

Our return journey was equally successful with that which we had concluded. We hit off the same pass, and

found it as unguarded as before, and having once got a league forward on Santa Fè soil, we no longer thought it necessary to make a circuitous route. We returned by the ordinary camp road, thus leaving our friend, N. Hogan's estancia, to the left, as I wished to call at another Irishman's place on the way home; but I regret to say that I shall be obliged to close this chapter in the same sad way as my last, for on our arrival at the house we found the widow and children in tears. She had just arrived from Rosario, where her poor husband had been laid in the English cemetery. He had been stabbed by the "facon" of a native, whom he had sometime before discharged from his service for bad conduct; and although he had fired four shots at the assassin, he had missed him each time. The murderer made his escape, and no attempt was ever made to capture him. He was, they say, a cousin of the chief of police at Rosario.

This poor Irish sheep farmer was a hard working, industrious man, and had done well in the country. He was able to ride to his house; there his own wife withdrew the fatal "facon" from his abdomen, where it had remained imbedded. "Horresco referens." I shudder while I relate this true and terrible story!

CHAPTER XXXII.

Foraging for horses—The horse of the pampas—The "seca"—My quinta—Gloomy times predicted—"Plumes" of the Bank—Algoraba seeds—A revolution breaks out—A very peculiar uniform—Things grow serious—The Consul's determination—"These Gauchos ruffians are not to be trusted"—British interests—"I order you to return at once, sir"—Her Majesty's Consul leaves Rosario and the dog-cart too—The Gauchos laugh at the mishap—The reviving effects of an iced brandy and soda—The Consul grows very brave—"Husbands, protect your wives"—A noble resolution—The Consul is safely delivered to his wife—The results of the "seca"—The vicissitudes of the sheep-farmer—Water-raising—The rush of animals to the Parana—The result—Tosca—Freshwater turtles—The monte and its denizens—In mourning for the "seca."

ONE of the principal difficulties connected with my business was the foraging of so large a number of horses as my establishment contained. It was not only necessary to feed these "caballos de passear," so that at all times they would present every appearance of good condition, but in order to give satisfaction to owners they must be "muy gordo"—very fat. No doubt they were to a great extent right, for the ordinary horse of the pampas is more than any other a sorry-looking animal when he is at all "flaco," or thin. Alfalfa and maize, or Indian corn, are the two necessary ingredients for attaining these results, and it was difficult at all times to secure a constant supply of the former from the quintas; and now that a "seca," or dry season, had set in with every appearance of continuing, alfalfa had not risen only in price, but it was difficult to obtain that article in large

quantities and of good quality. Under these circumstances I had considered it advisable to hire a quinta myself, which I had accordingly done.

The quinta I selected was in the same neighbourhood as that which I have described as belonging to the late McC——. It consisted of a two-roomed house, with kitchen and outhouse, a large number of fruit-trees, principally peach, and about twelve acres of good alfalfa grass. This would not altogether supply me, but it would go a long way towards it. As this valuable grass commences to grow again directly it is cut—by the time the mowers have cut one end of a field the other end has grown up again to a considerable height—and the oftener the crop (which will keep on producing for several years) is cut the better and stronger the grass gets; it is given green to the horses as a rule. I had furnished one room at the quinta for myself, and very often drove out and passed the night with the two workmen in charge of the farm; and as I had also a place near, where I kept used-up horses at grass, I was enabled on my way to town of a morning to look after these.

The "seca" was each day causing greater alarm, and gloomy times were predicted if rain did not soon set matters right. Already maize had risen to such a price that no profits were accruing to my establishment, and I was aware that any advance in my prices would only cause my customers to drop off, for men who like my friend, "Plumes," of the Bank, could afford to keep "una caballo de passear," at a moderate cost, would have to give up the luxury if the rates were increased. I had often heard of "algoroba" seeds as a substitute for maize, and I now determined to try it. I had seen plenty of this seed hanging in long pods from the "algoroba," a large tree of the acacia family, at Frayle Muerto, and I had contracted with an estanciero there for a large

supply as an experiment, and a very successful experiment it turned out; the horses one and all became very fond of it, and it was both nutritious, fattening, and economical; and I was now, to a great extent, independent of the consequences of the "seca," as I had also husbanded, dried, and stacked a large quantity of alfalfa.

To add to the feeling of depression which had seized on the community consequent upon the continuance of dry weather, a "revolution" had broken out in the province on account of the election of a new governor. The advocates of the different candidates, who were supposed to come quietly into Rosario to record their votes, had come to blows, and one or two pitched battles had already taken place with serious results; the military had been called out, and one well-known "general," whose peculiar uniform consisted of a scarlet swallow-tailed coat with gold epaulettes, sky-blue Zouave trousers, and an ordinary English white high hat, was already making himself very busy with a view to getting command of a division in time of peace, no matter which way the matter ended, by ordering armed parties to continue firing all day up and down the principal streets, which made it very disagreeable for those who were obliged to go out. Things were getting very serious; so serious that our worthy consul, whose wife was staying at an estancia in the camp, thought it advisable to have her brought to town, and for this purpose he asked me to drive him out in my dog-cart. Of course, I was only too happy to oblige him, and the following morning we started early. When we had got a few miles on our road we perceived an immense host of "Gauchos" riding towards us in the direction of Rosario. The consul, who was an old gentleman and very stout, did not at all like the appearance of the advancing party. "These Gauchos ruffians are not to be trusted," he remarked more than once, "and who knows but they may

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take it into their heads that we are spies, and we may have our throats cut within the next few minutes? I think we ought to turn round, and seek safety in Rosario. I will telegraph for a gunboat to Buenos Ayres, to come up the river at once to protect 'British interests.'" I replied "that it would be a very un-English like proceeding, indeed, to return to Rosario on account of these advancing hosts, who I felt sure would not molest us if we drove fearlessly by them; and that even if we did attempt a humiliating retreat upon Rosario in a 'dog-cart,' it would only arouse any suspicions which might exist of our being spies, and half-a-dozen of them could easily catch us up. Besides," I added, "think of poor Mrs. H——." "It's all very fine," said the old gentleman, his nervous excitement growing beyond all bounds, "*but I order you to return at once, sir.* I am her Majesty's consular representative, and in that capacity I ought to be at my post these troublesome times." (No doubt he was getting away from Rosario for this very reason.) What more he might have added I know not, but just at that instant my horse made a false step, fell, struggled for a moment, and then recovered his equilibrium, but the poor consul had been precipitated somewhat violently to the ground, face downwards. There he remained motionless until I alighted and helped him up. As he sat on the ground he asked me, "Am I much hurt? Are you wounded also?" I soon assured him that neither of us was seriously wounded; in fact, I had not left my seat at all; and that the "Gauchos" had all passed without interfering with us; indeed, they had only laughed at the mishap, which I myself could not now help doing, so comical and mystified an expression had the consul's countenance assumed. "And so it was not them after all?" "Oh! no; it was only the horse which made a mistake and pitched you out." "Thank God for that!" remarked

the consul, looking back at the retreating Gauchos. "But," he continued, "have you brought a flask with you?" I soon showed him that I had come better prepared for the road than he had expected, and that I not only had provided some Cognac, but some soda-water, and even ice, for her Majesty's consul, knowing the importance of my charge. Some of this cool and refreshing beverage I now prepared for him, and when he had drunk it we proceeded on our journey. "I tell you what it is," now commenced the brave consul, "I don't care a fig about these Gauchos, nor never did. I was about to say when your miserable old stumbling horse nearly broke my neck that, although it was clearly my duty to remain at my post in Rosario during these troublesome times, still I had another duty—a domestic duty also—commanded of me by a much higher authority than her Majesty—'Husbands, protect your wives'—and come what will, I was going to say, drive on through the very thick of these murdering Gauchos, for I will reach my wife this day, even if I have to fight my way inch by inch. So now," added the brave man, "you will be able to bear me witness when I relate this desperate adventure to Mrs. H——, that this was the resolution I had taken."

I replied that I could hardly contradict anything he chose to tell his wife, more especially as his remarks had been cut short by the upset; but no doubt he had formed a resolution of some kind, and I only trusted it was not one of determining never to trust himself out of the safety of the city, such as it was, to the open camps in a dog-cart during a revolution, as in that case I should be debarred his pleasant society. "Oh, no! I assure you old T—— H—— is not the individual to be so easily frightened as all that."

By the time we had arrived at the estancia, he had

worked himself into a belief that he was a very brave man, and the hero of a great adventure with an armed party of Gauchos, and in this frame of mind I delivered him over to her whom he had so recently sworn to protect.

The "seca" appeared already to have made considerable headway, and leagues of camps might be seen with scarcely anything green flourishing upon them, and the "arroyas," or creeks, were all but dry; what sheep remained were, indeed, miserable-looking objects, feeding on yellow patches here and there; and even the "biscacha" were driven to their wit's end, and were subsisting on the roots which nature had taught them to tear up from the earth in search of food, but even this precarious subsistence was insufficient to prolong life, and many of these hardy little animals might be seen dead or dying about the camps.

Those who owned sheep had been obliged either to let them die, and be satisfied with the hides, or else to hire camps farther south, where the "seca" had not been so severe, or had not penetrated at all; but as this could not always be done, nor could camps be so plentifully obtained, in most cases owners were obliged to sell to dealers sent for the purpose by southern capitalists, who drove their purchases down in vast flocks.

The price realised in these instances would be about ten paper dollars (1s. 8d.) per head, but even smaller prices were sometimes offered, and the poor grassless estancieros would be obliged to accept anything or allow their sheep to die; and when the "seca" ceased and the camps assumed their verdancy once more, the southern country would be sought, and enormous profits realised by these "capitalists" on the re-sale of these flocks. But it must be borne in mind that it was not always the camps of Santa Fé which suffered from these periodical visitations, for quite as often things were reversed, nor are the vicissi-

tudes of the camps and sheep farmers restricted to "secas," as will be seen hereafter.

Much misery, however, always results from a "seca," and large numbers of estancias change hands as the result of the havoc they entail. Happily, however, the sheep farmer is, to a certain extent, relieved from the lesser evil of the temporary "seca," which may be expected almost every season, owing to the many excellent systems which have been introduced into the camps for water-raising—thus the craving for water, from which all animals suffer so much, has been lessened; previously to this it was impossible to keep cattle where no natural supply of water existed, and the rush of animals to the Parana and other large rivers was extraordinary. There sheep, cattle, ostrich, deer, tigers, and every other living thing would jostle each other in the effort to obtain water to quench their thirst, and it was only those who arrived latest on the scene that would be permitted to return again on shore, so great was the demand for space by those pressing from behind, and in this manner thousands, nay, millions of living creatures have left their bones to form the "tosca" beds of the River Plate.

Two or three very pleasant days were passed at the estancia of my friend, J. A——, where Mrs. H—— had been staying. He was a most hospitable friend, and the consul and his wife were capital company; he (the consul) had spent many years previously in Central Africa, and was thoroughly well-informed with regard to the rise and progress of these settlements. Mr. H—— was a well-informed man—a member of many learned societies, and a constant contributor to literature in the way of travel and research. There was generally a good deal to interest the visitor to Pavon in the ornithological world, but owing to the scarcity of food and water in the camps, the Pavon River and its tributary, the Saladillo, were almost dry, and

even the fresh-water turtles, or terrapins, were hardly pushed for subsistence. Our consul, who never lost an opportunity of improving his acquaintance with nature, collected a great many of these little animals' eggs. They are about the size of those of the pigeon, but perfectly round; the shell is very hard, and requires a hole to be drilled by the point of a sharp knife before the yolk can be extracted; the flesh of these turtles, makes very good soup, but as ordinary flesh is so plentiful in the camps, it is seldom made use of. The eggs make a capital omelet.

The "monte," also, which usually looked so lively with a number of gay-plumaged birds glittering about among its branches, now seemed deserted and depressed—even the mischievous and talkative chattering magpie was conspicuous by its absence—and nothing remained but the tierra-tierra, whose warning notes were now unheeded; the red-crested blackbird, whose dark plumage and red head contrast so beautifully, was not to be seen,* but the South American robin, who, like our own cheerful little friend of the same family, never deserts the house come what will, blow hot, blow cold, was to be found at its post; and, to complete the list, the widow-bird, the male of which is coal black with white tips to the wings, while the colour of the female is reversed to milk white with black tips, seemed to be in mourning for the depression which reigned everywhere.

* A number and variety of blackbirds, about the size of our own well-known species, inhabit the camps, and are generally found about the montes. Some have red heads, some red breasts, others yellow crests, and others again yellow breasts only.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The election of the new Governor—Assassination of the curious old General—A cowardly and unprovoked assault—A season of great anxiety succeeds the revolution—Cock-pits, bull-rings, and Sunday races—First impressions of a bull-fight—The fight—The maimed horses—The description continued—Matadores—The acme of cruelty reached—The result, and remarks thereon—Contrary results when the scene changes—Sunday racing—Different modes of breaking-in wild horses—Fondness of the Gauchos for their horses and dogs—Attacks by dogs in the camps—Treachery—A visit from an ex-military man—The result of an ill-assorted partnership—The new alliance, and consequent results—Winding a web round the victim—*Un fait accompli*—Beggars on horseback—"A pobrennza no hay verguenza"—A thief in the caballeriza—The officer of police—Anecdote of the stolen saddle—The result.

WHEN we returned to Rosario everything was quiet once more, and the new Governor had been elected.

A good many murders and assassinations had taken place, and the curious old General had fallen amongst the number. He had been assassinated while enjoying a quiet "entrée" at an hotel at the corner of the Plaza. I believe, when wounded, he made a gallant defence, but he was doomed. He had been heard to make disparaging remarks about the Gaucho element, and while endeavouring to make his escape he was literally cut to pieces.

A most cowardly and unprovoked assault had also been made on a party who were endeavouring to carry out the last earthly rites of a young native who had been murdered by the mob during the riots; the funeral party had proceeded some distance towards the cemetery when

they were attacked by an armed party of "Gauchos," who fired right and left amongst the attendants, among whom were a number of Englishmen, for the young man was much respected and had been a peaceable and good citizen. Several of the party were wounded, and others narrowly escaped by scaling the walls of neighbouring gardens. Quickly the coffin was broken open and the corpse removed, when it was cut to pieces and strewed about the streets. Thus ended the "revolution."

A season of great gaiety succeeded the revolution. The camps were, as I have endeavoured to describe, in a bad way, and many families had come to reside in town. Cock-pits and bull-rings were established, and Sunday racing became more fashionable than ever. The "bull-ring," which was built upon a very large scale, and calculated to hold several thousand persons, was quite a new institution, and "took" well with the inhabitants. I visited this bull-ring several times, not that I admired the performance in the least, but it seemed to possess some irresistible attraction, which drew one towards it unconsciously, or by what has been aptly termed, "odic force." The performance always took place on Sunday afternoon, and the building was literally crammed, but as the centre of the wooden building was open, it was never disagreeably hot.

On the first visit to a bull-fight, I thought the performance very disgusting indeed. The horses used by the "matadores" were of the most wretched description. The "matador" first enters the ring or circus, mounted, spear in hand, his horse being blindfolded on one side; the bull is then turned in. He stands, at first gazing wildly about him, but one or two assistants, with coloured flags, soon attract his attention, and he rushes madly, first at one, then at another, but only to find the flag is all a hollow deception, and that the substance has disappeared into a

little recess provided for the purpose. The mounted man then faces the bull, which he annoys in every way he can, until at length infuriated, it charges him, and if he is expert enough he knocks it aside by a well-directed thrust of his spear, and escapes; but, if otherwise, the poor horse is generally the sufferer, and is either knocked down and killed on the spot, or else ripped open in a most horrible manner. In the latter case, if the horse is able to keep on his legs, he is made to stand another charge, but very often the weight and inconvenience of its entrails, dangling in the dust, necessitates its being withdrawn; but, as a rule, it is only in extreme cases that the "matador" is called upon by the beholders to change his mount, and it would be impossible to describe the horrid spectacle presented by these poor maimed horses before it becomes absolutely necessary to destroy them.

The bull now requires something more than the coloured flags to rouse its fury, and small barbed darts are employed for the purpose. These darts have a quantity of coloured paper or ribbon twisted round them, and when they are fixed in the neck of the infuriated animal by the "matadores," it shakes its head and roars with pain in its efforts to dislodge them; and these streamers become twisted and entangled round its horns and over its face. But even this torture is not sufficient. When the poor bull is getting worn out, then the acme of cruelty is reached. More barbed darts are introduced, but this time they are loaded, and contain an acid. As soon as the dart strikes the flesh it explodes with a loud report; the acid mixes with the blood of the animal; he writhes in agony; his eyeballs turn white; he shakes violently, thus the "barbs" are enabled to aggravate the wound, and intensify the pain; the "mad bull" now—for the animal loses all reason—charges wildly at anything and everybody. At length the company are getting weary of the performance,

and the visitors call loudly for the bull to be killed, and the "pecador" is introduced upon the scene, who, advancing towards the bull, keen-edged sword in hand, awaits the onset; and if he is successful, the sufferings of the poor beast are quickly ended by one well-directed thrust from the front, under the shoulder, to the heart. Deafening cheers and bravos now issue from every part of the building, the successful pecador bows proudly to the people. Coin, coins, "ounce" pieces, and every description of money is hurled into the arena; fair hands, and soft voices are raised and mingle with the crowds in continuing the deafening cheers. The greatest excitement prevails everywhere; the little children, who have been brought by their parents to learn their first lesson in assassination, now return home to "play bull-fight." Young maidens have been taught to look upon blood as water, and the cruel tormentor and slayer as a hero. No wonder, then, that murder is rife throughout the camps, and that females can be found willing and anxious to beg the life of favourite assassins.

But if the "pecador" is unsuccessful in terminating the existence of the "bull," and should be unfortunate enough to break his sword or leave it in the shoulder of the animal, the scene changes, and the sooner he makes room for another the better for himself. He is hissed from every quarter, is called a "bruto," a "sonso," and, in fact, he finds himself in a very awkward position; something, probably, the same as I found myself on the occasion of my first experience with the "maté" pot.

Those who did not attend the "Gran tornado de tauros," or bull-fight, usually were to be seen at the races in the outskirts of the town; great numbers of "Gauchos" went to these meetings every Sunday when matches, made during the week, would be run, and others would be improvised on the spot; but these races, except

to the Gauchos themselves, are always tedious, owing to the number of "partidos" which usually have to be got through before the genuine race is commenced. It certainly is wonderful the perfection to which these people bring their horses, especially considering the rough treatment they receive when first "backed." A wild horse is "lassoed" and thrown down, his head is covered by a poncho, and having girthed on him one of their heavy recados, or native saddles, from which it is not easy to be dislodged, a heavy Chillian curb-bit is thrust into his mouth—capable, one would think, of breaking his jaw—or else a more primitive bit of raw hide is fastened behind the *touches* and round the jaw, which is equally severe; he is then allowed to rise, his legs still manacled or strapped, and is mounted by a rider with spurs with rowels six inches long, and a big *rebenque* in his hand; the tying is then unloosed, and the animal is galloped over the tree-less pampas until he sinks exhausted in a fainting state. There is, however, another milder method sometimes adopted by these pampas horsemen. After "lassoing" a horse they blind his eyes with a poncho, tie him fast to a post, and girth the native saddle on him. The animal is terrified and enraged; trembles, frets, sweats, and would, after a while, fall down from fright and weakness; the Gaucho goes up to him, caresses, removes the poncho from his eyes, continues to caress him; so that, according to the ideas of the country, the horse becomes grateful, and attached to the man for delivering him from something frightful, and from that moment the process of training becomes easy, and with the help of long spurs and a rebenque, is completed in a few days.

Besides the great fondness which the Gaucho possesses for the horse, one would imagine that the canine species also has considerable attractions for him. Every house and "rancho," or cabin, has its mongrel occupants; some

of these dogs are immensely large and very ferocious, many of them are as big as mastiffs with bull-dog heads. They will attack the wayfarer, from houses situated at a considerable distance, as he rides across the camp, and will follow, barking and biting at the tail or fetlocks of his horse for as much as half-a-league, and woe betide the visitor if he attempts to dismount without uttering his "Ave Maria," and receiving the customary invitation to "get off" and come in. Ferocious, however, as these unruly quadrupeds are, many of them are not so formidable as their appearance would lead one to suspect, and "their bark is worse than their bite;" but it would never do to trust them too much, for they are as treacherous as their masters, if they can get the back turned.

Amongst the numerous acquaintances who called upon me—for the Caballeriza Central was the principal place of rendezvous for the English-speaking community before the British and American Club was inaugurated—was an ex-military man, who had served in the same regiment with my younger brother. He had, accompanied by his wife, arrived in Santa Fè with a full determination to make his fortune in a few years, and then return to the old country to enjoy the fruits of his labour. He was a very gentlemanly young fellow, and a strict disciplinarian. He had now joined an old settler, whom he had met in London, in a cattle estancia in the Northern Camps; but before they had been together many weeks a split occurred in the cabinet, brought about, I believe, by the ladies of the respective partners, and a separation took place immediately. My friend and his wife then came to Rosario, where one or two enterprising and speculative individuals undertook to find profitable employment for his capital. I do not know exactly what influenced his ultimate decision, but he not only listened to, but joined in partnership with a bankrupt ship-chandler, whose affairs were

even then in liquidation, and whose antecedents, it was commonly reported, had not only been very bad in Rosario, but evil reports had reached the South American continent from distant climes where this individual had carried on business before. This bankrupt tradesman in a comparatively short time "walked into" the captain for the whole of the money withdrawn from the estancia, in return for which he placed him behind his counter and made him attend customers as a common shopman, and when his money was all gone he made him undertake a journey to England, leaving his wife behind, in order to obtain more money. "Capital is all that is required to make this business profitable; persuade your friends at home of this, and induce them to lend you or give you more capital, and in three years I will guarantee repayment with interest, and your own fortune will be made." The "bait" was taken unsuspectingly, and the journey undertaken. In vain did I remind him of the Spanish proverb "La mala llaga sana, la mala fama mata"—"a bad wound heals, a bad name kills." It was no use explaining to him that he was only ruining himself in purse and reputation by mixing himself up with a low individual whose name was so very bad. But the web was well wound round the victim; and even when he once more returned with fresh capital, part of which was invested in a mill outside the city, he was obliged again to borrow money from his relatives. "All that is required now is that plenty of grist be brought to the mill. Tell your relatives and friends this: advances must be made to the agricultural settlers to enable them to grow corn, which we will grind for them, and then your fortune, my fortune, and your friends' fortune will soon be *un fait accompli.*" And each time the poor gulled captain went and returned; and it was, I understand, only when friends and relations refused to be bled any more, that his eyes were opened to

the fact that he had been "done." Meanwhile, the estancia in the Northern Camps prospered, and daily increased in value, and in every way turned out a success.

Amongst other visitors who never failed to call up on Saturday afternoon were the beggars. Numbers of these poor people live in the camps and outskirts of the town, and they are only allowed by the authorities to ask alms on Saturday. On this day they visit from house to house, repeat a short prayer, pronounce a blessing, and ask assistance, which is seldom refused, although the coin given is often the smallest issued from the mint.

"A pobreza no hay vergüenza."

"Poverty has no shame," certainly appears to be the case in South America, for these beggars generally ride in from the camp on good fat horses, and able bodied men and women will often ride up on horseback and knock at your door to ask charity.

As a rule these people are perfectly honest while they remain on your premises, which is more than could be said of the military police, who look after them and others; from time to time I had missed a good many things from the stables, and naturally suspected those employed in the yard, but now the climax had been arrived at, my own particular saddle had been stolen. I was very angry indeed, as it was not an article easily replaced in that country; but I could not get any satisfactory evidence as to what had become of it. The only stranger who had been admitted to the harness-room was the officer of police. He had visited the place, on his tour of inspection. Certainly he did wear a formidable "poncho," sufficient to hide two or three saddles; but then the "officer" surely would not act the part of a common thief.

Some weeks afterwards, I was returning from my quinta

where I had slept the night. Cantering along the streets, I entered the town, without recollecting for the moment that I was transgressing the law by so doing, when just as I was turning a corner, I was pounced upon by the identical officer who had inspected my harness-room on the occasion I have mentioned, and two of his soldiers or police. I was ordered to surrender, which of course I did, and quietly rode beside them to the "policia," where I was aware I should merely be fined. On the way I thought of my saddle, and looking at that on which my captor was sitting I at once recognised it to be the very one so recently stolen from me. There could be no doubt of it, for good English hunting saddles were not things which Argentine officers usually rode on; but for the present I made no remark, nor did I let him see that I had noticed anything. When we arrived at the "policia," I was brought before the "chéfe," who was a friend and creditor of mine, one whom I constantly applied to for payment, as a matter of policy, but whom I was aware would never pay me, for he was never known to pay anybody—he saluted me and shook my hand. On my arrival before his august presence, the officer made his charge in the usual exaggerated manner. "The prisoner was galloping through the streets as hard as ever his horse could go, and using both whip and spur ferociously, much to the great alarm and danger of the very crowded thoroughfares, as witness of which these men are ready to swear if necessary;" * and here the satellites came forward to give corroborative testimony. I need not say to my readers that the whole of this account was a tissue of falsehoods. I had merely been cantering very quietly along the streets which had not half-a-dozen representatives of the human family perambulating them, but I knew the good "chéfe," would not convict me, without a hearing at least, and as

* Not customary in this country.

truth seemed to be anything but the order of the day, I replied in answer to the "chéfe's" request to reply to the charge, that I had lost my best saddle a short time since, and from information subsequently received had no doubt, strange as it might seem, that the very individual officer, who now made the charge, was the thief (commotion.) I knew him well by sight, and that morning when on my way to town, I had espied him in the distance, and fearing he might attempt to escape, I had cantered towards him, when I at once saw that he was then riding upon the very saddle (great commotion, during which the officer, endeavoured to leave the room), which bore my mark—the harp, registered before his excellency; and added that it could be seen if he would accompany me to the door, where all our horses were standing. This the chéfe agreed to do, and in the course of a few minutes I satisfied him as to the truth of my statement. The restoration of the saddle was at once decreed, and the charge against me given up, and I believe the officer was afterwards dismissed.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

My menagerie—Kitty—The guanaco—Other zoological specimens—The fox expiates his sins—Anecdote of the puma and the housekeeper—Dr. N. of Ascunsion—A mysterious message—Anecdote of the portmanteau—The suburbs of Rosario—Assault and robbery on the provision cart and driver—The cartman's story—A very disagreeable suggestion overruled—Circumstances which do not always tell in one's favour.

DURING my residence in Rosario I had from time to time collected a great many curiosities, but that which attracted the visitor to the Caballeriza Central most was the small space railed off in front of my cottage residence devoted to a "menagerie;" prominent amongst the occupants of which might be seen "Kitty," a very fine specimen of the tiger of South America (*Felis onça*), the gift of Mr. Duguid, a resident merchant of Rosario. "Kitty" was, of course, kept in a large cage somewhat removed from the rest of the menagerie; but she was wonderfully tame, and would allow me to pat her head and caress her through the bars. A very fine guanaco (*Lama Huanicus*) might be said next to claim attention; these animals are easily tamed. There was also the coati, or coati mundi (*Nasua nasica*), a peculiar carnivorous animal found only in the New World, and remarkable for its long, pointed snout. It is a great favourite in captivity, and becomes very tame. There were besides ostrich (*Rhea Americana*), burrowing owls, tierra-tierra, carancha, and the grey or silver fox, and several other varieties. But my fox had managed one night to get loose, and had committed sad havoc amongst

the feathered tribe, actually killing two fine rheas and several smaller birds. Some days afterwards the fox, as if to expiate its sins, committed suicide. I had fastened him in a shed to prevent further mischief, when in some unaccountable manner he managed to twist his chain round the hind legs of a horse standing near, which in its struggles to extricate itself fell upon the fox, crushing him to death on the spot.

One day, when visiting an acquaintance, I was taken to the enclosure at the back of my friend's house to see a South American lion, or more strictly speaking, the conguar or puma (*Felis Concolar*), which had been received by the family as a gift. It was to all appearance fastened securely by a chain, and was evidently still very wild and savage. I was accompanied by the lady, her daughter, and housekeeper; but while we were in the height of our praise and admiration of the handsome animal it suddenly made a bound forward towards the "basco," housekeeper, and the chain snapped in an instant. The lady and daughter at once screamed and made good their escape, shutting the gate securely behind them; but the housekeeper and I were not so fortunate, and she was for the moment in considerable danger, for the animal attacked her, and already had sprung at her once. The poor creature was too frightened to do anything but try and prevent the animal from biting her. Fortunately she did not hit it, otherwise the consequences might have been very serious. Meanwhile I secured the chain, and tied or fastened it to the broken piece still attached to the puma, which in turn I quickly attached to an orange-tree standing near. Having thus secured the infuriated animal, I assisted the woman, who was too frightened to stir, to the kitchen. There she found her husband, the cook of the establishment, who had been quietly looking on from the window at the whole scene without attempting in any way to render assistance,

which fact, it seems, had not escaped the notice of the now enraged female, frightened as she was; and she commenced at once an onslaught upon him. And to judge by the formidable appearance of the combat, the sound of the blows, and the accompanying epithets, one would imagine the poor cook was in turn having a bad time of it, and was equally in need of a protector—at least for the moment. At length he made his escape into the dwelling-house, his amiable spouse still pursuing him, and calling out in Spanish, "You brute, do you deserve a nice, kind, considerate wife, whom you leave here to be eaten alive by lions and wild beasts? Just wait till I catch you, and I'll teach you to remember when you have got a wife to protect her. Oh, you savage, you brute!" But at this stage of the proceedings the lady of the house, who had now recovered herself sufficiently, interfered, and peace was restored to the household.

I received a mysterious message one day from my friend Dr. N——, of Ascuncion, in whose company, it will be recollected, I had travelled to Buenos Ayres on the occasion of my last visit. The messenger said that the Doctor had just arrived per steamer from Paraguay, and that he was still on board, and wished me to drive him in my dog-cart to the hotel: he would await my arrival. But, as it happened, my dog-cart was out, and instead of sending a message to that effect I went myself to talk with the Doctor.

Upon arriving at the "mole" I saw my friend sitting on an ordinary portmanteau. The first question he asked was about the dog-cart, and why I had not brought it. "But," said he, after hearing my reason, "I want to get this portmanteau to the hotel; it is very heavy." And here he whispered in my ear, "You must help me to carry it yourself,"—without showing any signs of its remarkably heavy,—"and you must not ask any

until we get to the hotel, when I will tell you all about it." I promised to do as he wished, although in so doing I thought myself perhaps a little rash; but taking hold of the handle at the moment all other considerations were forgotten. It certainly was the heaviest portmanteau I had ever assisted to move. What in the world could it contain? Specimens of rock, or perhaps bricks from Ascuncion, I suggested to the Doctor as we walked along. On arrival at the Custom-house another inquisitive individual addressed the worthy Doctor, and requested him to open the portmanteau; but he was fully prepared for this interference on the part of the Custom-house, and slipping a coin into the willing hand of the official, which at once acted as an "open sesame," we were allowed to proceed with our mysterious burden. I was a little disappointed for the moment, as I had looked forward to a rest at this stage of our proceedings; but when we had got some distance past the Customs the Doctor proposed a halt and change of hands. Thus relieved and refreshed, we quickly reached our destination; nor would the Doctor allow me to relax my responsibility until we had sefely deposited the formidable portmanteau in his sitting-room, where, after ordering some refreshment, he vouchsafed to enlighten me as to its contents. "I guess you would like to know what makes that portmanteau so mighty unweildy?" commenced the American; "and I shall just tell you right off. Yes, sir, that leathern portmanteau contains a large portion of the property of the late President Lopez of Paraguay, and his valuable diamond-hilted sword. I have undertaken, on behalf of a friend of Madame Lynch, the much-wronged widow, to bring them here in order that they may be forwarded to England. Already almost the whole of the unfortunate President's property has been discovered and confiscated [illegible] ernments of this country and Brazil; and it is [illegible] ounces"—opening the portmanteau at

the same time and exhibiting a large sum of money—as well as I recollect between £5,000 and £10,000—"may reach England in safety. I have chosen you," remarked the wily American, "knowing you to be an honourable man, and coming of a courteous and gallant race, you have merely assisted in restoring the property of a most deserving lady, who in her affliction requires both sympathy and support." I told him I was quite satisfied with his explanation. The sword was indeed a beautiful piece of workmanship, and I believe most valuable. I do not feel at liberty to say through what channel they afterwards reached their destination; but I can state, what is tolerably well known, that they arrived safely.

Ever since the revolution numbers of bad characters had infested the suburbs of Rosario, and numerous robberies had been committed. The workmen at my quinta had been obliged to keep a good look out each night, and the few horses kept there had to be put in the shed each evening for safety. The week's provisions were generally sent every Saturday evening, the cart remaining until Monday morning, and returning with a load of alfalfa. Here there was a good opportunity for these marauders, nor did they let it slip. The youth in charge of the cart on this occasion was a native, and like many of his class had a great dislike to firearms, and no persuasion could induce him to carry a revolver for protection. He maintained that no one would interfere with him; but this theory, as he afterwards had reason to remember, did not always hold good, for on this occasion, when within half-a-mile of his destination, he was suddenly pounced upon by half-a-dozen "Gauchos," who "gagged" him while they robbed the cart of its contents, and not content with this they stripped the poor boy of all his clothes, afterwards returning him his shirt and boots—a pair of high boots which they found on trial would fit none of the party, a fact which annoyed

them so much that they subsequently kicked him severely. In this dilemma, instead of continuing his journey to the quinta, he returned to the "caballeriza," where, almost naked, he related his adventure. The poor lad was still much alarmed and considerably bruised, but when he mentioned the incident of the boots he grew indignant with his enemies, and almost cried with rage and mortification at the recollection of having been kicked because boots which he had bought for himself did not happen to fit every common thief who might waylay him—a fortunate coincidence on which he was now inclined to congratulate himself. He showed me the remainder of the whip with which he had endeavoured to protect himself, of which about six inches of the handle alone remained. It had been hacked to pieces by the "facons" of the robbers, whom he assured me had at one time discussed seriously the wisdom of cutting his throat, but the suggestion had been overruled by some of the band, it being pointed out that he was a countryman; a circumstance, by-the-bye, which does not always tell in one's favour.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Arrival of the Henley Colony—Origin—Objects—The colonists—Wooden huts—Prospects and probable profits—The first consignment of colonists—The demand for horses at the caballeriza—Buck-jumbers and empacadoes—Doing good service—Mounted colonists at large—Destination of colonists—Disappointment—Steam-plough Melrose—Story of his antecedents and final exit—Another settlement selected—The iron church—The four-in-hand—Five-and-twenty plough and cart-horses supplied to the Director-General—Story of the drive to the colony—My passengers—Competition for the box-seat—The model sportsman from Liverpool—Growing flax in the pampas—The sporting gent takes a header—Hold hard—The result—Proceedings and progress at the settlement—A subsequent visit to the colony—Great changes—Pandemonium—Collapse and downfall of the flax-growers—What became of the colonists—Flight of Henley and a portion of his family—The bill of exchange—The auction—What the colonists received from the sale—A neat uniform—Bad ones and good ones—Without doubt a misguided man—The clergyman and his wife—The surgeon and the secretary—Brandy and water on the brain—The remainder of the Henleys.

THE greatest event which occurred during my residence in Rosario had now taken place. I allude to the arrival of the "Henley Colony."

This colony, which owed its origin to Mr. Henley, was formed for the purpose of settling upon the Camps of Frayle Muerto, ostensibly with the object of growing flax, an article, the culture of which, it was understood, the promoter was experienced in, the colonists numbering about one hundred and fifty,—an assortment of ex-military and naval officers, briefless barristers, and young gentlemen, whose parents were anxious to get rid of them in some way or other. Each colonist had paid into the funds of the colony a sum of money, besides being fur-

nished with an outfit, consisting of, amongst other items, a suit of uniform—for they were to be a military colony, capable of protecting themselves against the treacherous Indian—a wooden "regulation" hut, a demi-piqued military saddle, rifles, revolvers, swords, and other accoutrements.

In return for all these preparations and their own personal labours, the prospect, nay, the certainty, of riches was held out to them, at no distant future. Flax was an article of commerce, easily grown, much in demand, saleable, and highly profitable; and these productive plains in South America possessed all the alluvial requirements essential to successful cultivation, so said the advocates of the new colony.

The first consignment of colonists, who were accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Henley, family and suite, made their appearance on the quiet waters of the Parana one fine morning in the autumn of the year, amidst the sounding of trumpets; and I think almost the first visit they made upon landing was to the "Caballeriza Central." Horses were now in great demand. My stock was considerable, but somehow I did not exactly like the appearance of many of these young flax growers, and I considered it wiser for the present to exercise some discretion as to the disposal of my stud. I had certainly no objection to sell a few horses, that is, if I could dispose of them for ready money and at fairly remunerative prices; and on these terms a good many animals changed hands. My "buck-jumpers" and "empacadores" were now more than ever in demand, and did good work, and more than one colonist had reason to remember the error of judgment committed in the selection of a mount; although, no doubt the "Henley Colony" could count amongst their ranks several excellent horsemen, whose fame in this art subsequently became known in various parts of the Republic.

However, I did consent, and manage to mount a good many of the young fellows; and during that afternoon the new arrivals might be seen all over the city and suburbs of Rosario. Several "sailors' horses," as they were called in the stables, as usual returned without their riders, for they had the knack of appearing disposed to remain quietly outside a house without the attendance of a small boy; but they never forgot to take advantage of the first opportunity of "clearing out."

The colonists were to have proceeded at once to Frayle Muerto, but unfortunately information had reached Mr. Henley that the "gentleman," with whom he had made such "advantageous terms" for the purchase of the colony's lands, had come to grief.

It seems that Mr. Henley had been in communication with an individual named Melrose, better known in Frayle Muerto and the Republic in general as "Steam-plough Melrose," a cognomen acquired from his being the first settler who employed the steam-plough in the country. Mr. Melrose had joined some settlers in Frayle Muerto a few years previously, and had made more real progress than any other colonist in those camps. He had lately undertaken a journey to Scotland, his own country, from which he had returned a short time before the arrival of "the colony," and had brought with him several steam-ploughs, or had made arrangements that they should follow him. But during his stay in Buenos Ayres rumours had reached his ears "which set him a thinking."

It seems that the individual glorying in the sweet name of "Melrose," the "pattern," whom all young men were recommended by the enterprising proprietors of the *Buenos Ayres Standard* to copy, was a runaway clerk from a warehouse in Glasgow, his real name being H. W——. He was trusted by his master in the capacity

of shipping clerk, and had made use of the confidence reposed in him for dishonest ends, having substituted, in lieu of a consignment of silks to Calcutta, an article known as the "black diamond" *alias* "coal." The silk he managed to dispose of, and with the proceeds he sailed for South America, well-knowing that sufficient time must elapse before the Calcutta firm discovered the fraud. He had, as I have already said, been settled and working industriously in the Northern Camps for some time, and had been "home" more than once. On the first occasion he had taken with him letters of introduction from his partners, who were most respectably connected in Scotland, and had so ingratiated himself into the good opinion of his new acquaintances that he had induced the sister of one partner to become his wife, and return with him to Frayle Muerto. The family were well off, and he obtained with her a considerable sum of money, part of which had purchased the steam-ploughs I have alluded to.

But in an evil moment he had fallen into the company of a fellow-clerk, who had recently emigrated to the Argentine Republic, and was employed in Buenos Ayres. No doubt time had wrought considerable changes in the appearance of H. W——. "But," wrote home the clerk, "if H. W—— is alive, he is now in this country under the assumed name of Melrose; I cannot, I am sure, be mistaken." This information was conveyed to his real wife, who was still living, and by whom he had a numerous family. She, poor woman, anxious to shield him from the vengeance of the law, which was sure to follow, should his whereabouts be discovered, communicated these suspicions to him, which had now resulted in his flight, leaving behind him the sister of his partner and her child, whom he had so cruelly wronged; and thus ended the transaction between him and Mr. Henley.

It was necessary at once to secure other settlements on

which to found the colony. At present the colonists were "settled" at a large hotel in the outskirts of the city, where they were running riot. They had now been several days on shore, and many of them had suited themselves with horses, and all were anxious to become settled on their lands. When I say all, I mean the greater number; for some half dozen had made up their minds already to "cut their connection" with the colony, since it had become necessary to change the "location" of the settlement. An arrangement had at length been come to between Mr. Henley and the owner of some property about ten miles from Rosario; and thither all the paraphernalia of the colonists was being rapidly removed.

Among the various "necessaries" which Mr. Henley had considered it important to furnish for the benefit of the colony, was a "large galvanised iron church," which was brought out in pieces, all ready for putting together —this church, by-the-bye, is now the English church of Rosario—and a large open "break," or waggonette, with pole, splinter bars, and harness for four horses. This latter was left in my charge, with instructions to horse it, in order to transport, when the proper time arrived, as many of the young gentlemen as possible to their destination. I had already provided the "director-general" with five-and-twenty plough and cart horses, which had been employed for some days transferring the huts and stores from the city to the camp; but for the present I had merely been asked to provide horses temporarily. I shall never forget the numbers of passengers that arrived on the eventful morning on which they were to set out for the flax district. There was great competition for the box-seat, and many individuals of sporting exterior presented themselves in the competition for this honour; but finally the laurels descended upon the head—the red head of the very "sportingest" of the sporting exteriors, and as I did

not interfere in the matter, this individual ascended, and took his seat by my side. He looked and felt decidedly warm; for, in addition to his colour, he wore a huge "Ulster" coat. His idea of a "horsey" get-up consisted in a pair of white-duck trousers in imitation of breeches, a pair of high fishing boots, a huge pair of spurs, which he had turned upside down, and a heavy hunting crop. He had been a clerk, he informed me as we proceeded towards our destination followed by an innumerable host of horsemen, in a merchant's office in Liverpool, but found it hanged slow. He much preferred the idea of growing flax in the "pampas," as he called it. He was very fond of horses, and especially driving. This reminded him very much of the "Liverpool Races Cup-day." I could not see exactly where the likeness existed, but as I had never been to the said races on a cup-day, I did not contradict him. Many of the horsemen had brought with them from home hunting horns, and did not omit producing them on this occasion. The road was therefore enlivened by the efforts of these musicians, to whose choruses was joined the jest and laughter, the "gone-aways" and "forrads" of the light-hearted young colonists, as they galloped, helter-skelter, over the "downy" camps, on their way to their future home. My companion on the "box" was very communicative, until we came in sight of a large river, which, as we approached, he discovered was not bridged. "Is the colony at the other side of that river," he inquired; "and if so, how do you mean to cross it?" "Yes," I informed him, "the colony is about one and a half miles on the other side of the river. I mean to drive across it, and you will then be able to see the settlement from the rise on the opposite bank." "But, is it very deep?" "Well, not very. It is about twice the depth of this box-seat; but if you hold firmly on, it only takes a moment to get through, and we always cross

rivers in this way in South America. The horses, you know, understand the thing." By this time we had nearly approached the crossing I had selected, and I had increased my pace almost to a gallop, so as to get a good swing for ascending the bank on the opposite side. "Hold hard," now cried the "sportingest of the sporting" on the box-seat. "Let me down; let me down, I tell you," he now roared, seeing that I heeded him not, and that we had almost approached the water's edge. "Oh my God, what will become of us at all! Stop!" But instead of "stopping," onwards, through the water, dashed the horses, splashing it in all directions; for, although the bottom of the river was hard, the water was up to the middle of the horses. One greater splash than usual, unfortunately at this moment, reached the now utterly terrified "Liverpool Cup-man," and, no doubt imagining the coincidence of which I had forewarned him was about to take place, he summoned up all his remaining resolution, and without saying good-bye, sprang from his proud position on the box-seat, to the muddy and troubled waters of the river.

As we now rolled quietly up the gentle elevation ascending from the river, I looked back to see what had become of my late sporting companion. I had previously been assured of his safety by the noisy laughter of those comprising the "body" of my passengers. There he was again on the bank of the river we had just left, still calling on me to hold hard. He was surrounded by sympathizing fellow-colonists, but I am afraid their sympathy was very like my own; for, as I proceeded, I could perceive the lively equestrians had induced him to set out on foot, "Ulster" and all, on his damp and perilous voyage. And still the faint echo of his voice seemed to reach me and say, "hold hard;" but my heart was steel against such appeals, and I knew the walk would do

him more good after his dip than any benefit he or I should derive from his further progress on the box-seat.

The colony had already assumed something of a busy and settled appearance. A small square had been surrounded by the huts I have mentioned as part of the outfit of each colonist. Some were busy grooming their horses, others were employed digging wells, others were acting as cooks, while several volunteered their assistance to assist me in any way they could. The new comers, whom I had now brought with me, were the last of those which had already arrived, but more were daily expected from England.

When I visited the settlement, which I did some time afterwards, I could easily perceive the change that had come over everything. Nothing but discontent reigned around. Henley had scarcely visited the settlement, provisions were falling short, "caña" had made its appearance amongst the young settlers (and its effects are always fatal) drinking was carried on to excess; and, in fact, this little colony of young gentlemen was turned into a regular pandemonium. Nothing could be expected to result from all this but the break up of the colony.

Space will not permit me to enter more minutely into the various stages through which the Henley Colony passed, nor the many circumstances which led to its downfall. Suffice it to say that it collapsed within three months of its arrival in the country.

Many of the young men at once returned home; others were obliged to remain until funds for this purpose were sent them; others again sought employment in various capacities in and around Rosario; while some, who were possessed of a little capital, made efforts on their own account at sheep and other farming. But want of experience merely swamped all their efforts, and in each instance failure, complete failure, was the result.

Henley disappeared suddenly one day with his wife, daughters, and younger children; not, however, without having made an effort to get back a bill of exchange which he had induced me to take for my horses, &c. "It was written in English," he told his messenger, who called upon me, to say; "and if I would return it he would write a new one in Spanish." My answer was that I was already paid; my banker, who happened to be his also, having discounted it. I would, however, I desired him tell Mr. Henley, not omit to mention the fact—significant fact—to my banker. My banker got me out of the matter all right, and I believe I was one of the lucky ones in this way.

An auction was shortly afterwards called, and all the stock-in-trade—horses, ploughs, hempseed, &c., &c., church, and four-in-hand, as the auction bills described the "break"—were sold, which resulted, after paying all recognised liabilities, in the colonists receiving five Bolivian dollars a piece—about sixteen shillings English money. For a long time afterwards Rosario was well supplied with uniforms, military saddles, rifles, revolvers, &c., as many of these articles were disposed of by the young colonists before returning to England. The uniform was very well chosen; it consisted of a blue serge shell-jacket and trousers striped with white, white facings, a white gilt helmet with red loose hair plume.

No doubt there were many "bad ones" amongst them, regular outcasts picked up in London—perchance well born, but "bad ones" for all that—but as a rule they were really quiet, respectable young fellows only requiring good generalship to be put into any form. There can be no doubt, however, it would be no easy task to make profitable workmen out of a colony consisting of the "stuff" I have described. As a rule, the sinew is not there for hard work; and the ex-military man who can convert his sword

into a ploughshare is as scarce as the sailor who can bring himself to an anchor.

I do not judge Mr. Henley so severely as I have been accustomed to hear his enemies do. Without doubt he was a very misguided man; but it is hardly more astonishing to think that he could have deceived himself into the belief that a great future lay before him and his colony, than it is to imagine that so many dupes should be found to follow him and join their fortunes with his; yet such was the result.

The clergyman, his wife, and the surgeon, attached to the colony were amongst the first to return; the former lived in Rosario until they left for home. He, poor man, had given up a good appointment in order to join Mr. Henley. The secretary, who had a little money, having been at the English "bar," opened a "bar" of his own in Rosario, and drank himself to death in two months. His ending was very sad—he died in the agonies of *delirium tremens*. I afterwards heard, "at home," that he died of water on the brain; but, as I regret to say, I saw him in his last hours I was forced to remember there was a great deal of brandy mixed with it. The two elder sons of the Henley family remained some little time afterwards in the neighbourhood of Rosario, where they took a quinta near me, which was ultimately a failure. They always maintained that their father was as much a victim to his own scheme as anyone else, and that he had no dishonest motives—a statement I quite believe, for I feel sure had he intended to act dishonestly from the beginning—I do not say he did not afterwards when he found himself greatly embarrassed—he would never have brought with him a wife and ten children of all ages.

The stud-groom and the professed cook remained with me.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Departure of the old year—Fortune smiles upon the Caballeriza Central—A shooting party—"Shakes down"—Across camp—A "good un"—Tit-for-tat—*Carne con quero*—"Turning-out" at cock-crow—"Cocktails"—Game—The result of the day's shooting—Catching partridges alive—The rural protection society—Shocking brutality—Capturing the murderers—Breakfast at a native estancia—The estanciero's household and their habits—Respect for British punctuality—Absence of family likeness in the family—Visiting the "corrales"—Threshing corn by means of horses—Brick-making—Gaucho feats of horsemanship—The return to Rosario—A murderer blunderingly executed.

ANOTHER year had passed away. Carnival, with its gaieties and holiday times, its processions, water-throwing, and "bal masques," had come and gone. The long-expected and much-talked-of "Henley Colony" had arrived, lived a few weeks, and ceased to exist. No longer in the columns of the *Standard* were to be seen glaring accounts of the doings of "Steam-plough Melrose." The camps had again assumed their wonted verdant hue, and the sun shone brightly once more upon the plains of Santa Fè, while brilliant rainbows now and then reminded the estancieros that plentiful and beneficent showers might be expected.

The "Caballeriza Central" had passed through trying times, no doubt, during the "seca;" but still it reared its head proudly above all these difficulties and hardships, and the business and premises had increased, and

both its internal and external appearance was much improved. An excellent stud-groom had been secured from the crumbling fabric of the Henley Colony, and well-polished "caballos de passear" might now be seen daily issuing from the yard, while a professed cook—left as a legacy from the same source—prepared the dinner for the worthy proprietor, and enabled him at length to dispense his hospitality, and to invite to his well-cooked dinners the ladies as well as the lords of the land. In a word, fortune smiled upon the Caballeriza Central and its proprietor, and he—hard-worked man—thought he might with safety accept an invitation to join a shooting party at an old friend's estancia at Pavon, and combining business with pleasure, see how a number of horses, his property, then grazing upon the green pastures of those camps watered by the "Saladillo," were getting on, with a view to turning them to more profitable account.

The party of shooters who were invited on this occasion consisted of a number of young fellows engaged in business in Rosario, and as my friend was in the habit of dispensing his invitations in rather a reckless sort of way, entirely regardless as to the accommodation his house afforded or the elasticity of his coverlets, it was advisable to bring some rugs wherewith to improvise a shake-down. Many of these estancias are one-storied, "azotea" roofed houses, looking far more roomy, judging from the exterior, than would be found to be the case inside. However, on these occasions the order of the day was late hours and early rising, and the actual time devoted to sleep was unimportant. I rode across camp to the estancia, a distance of twenty-seven miles, chosing my buck-jumber, which required exercise, and was one of the best horses in my possession. His peculiarity of temperament in no way disconcerted me, and no one was more fully alive to the fact than the horse himself. On this occasion he carried

me almost the whole distance at an average paced canter. I have mentioned that this horse was well aware that I cared little for his acrobatic performances, and I have reason to believe his instincts extended further even than this; for, one day, when riding through the camps, I noticed a particularly large flock of duck and widgeon sitting on the waters of a large "leguna." As they appeared to take no notice of my approach, I determined to test how close they would allow me to them; but my horse did not like the idea of wetting his legs, and I was obliged to use my spurs freely. This annoyed the animal considerably; but he did not offer so much opposition as I anticipated, nor did it disturb the ducks, which remained quietly until I discharged my revolver at them, without doing them any harm. I now endeavoured to return to shore; but it was my horse's turn this time. He had stood the shot and the "punishment" well; but now he would give me a lesson; he might never have so good an opportunity again. So he quietly arched his back, cat-like, and gave me five minutes of his favourite performance. He did not succeed in unseating me, nor do I think he either expected or wished to do so; but he literally deluged me with water—muddy water—from head to foot, and then walked quietly on shore. In such a glorious climate, and on the plains of South America, such a catastrophe as this was not serious, and I merely mention the circumstance, *en passant*, as an incident illustrative of the surpassing instinct of the horse.

When the remainder of the party arrived, as they all did about dinner hour, the "carne con quero," the great native dish of the camps, was served up. This dish consists of a particular cut from the bullock, roasted whole in its own skin on the ashes of a camp fire. The fire is first burned down to the requisite heat, and upon the burnt embers the "carne con quero" is placed. It is the

opinion of most people who have had an opportunity of tasting a "roast" cooked in this way that the meat is unsurpassed for richness and delicacy of flavour, and such seemed now to be the opinion of the jovial company assembled at the Estancia de Santa Marguerita. Sometimes whole oxen are roasted in this manner on occasions of great feasting.

Notwithstanding the fact of the number of guests being much in excess of the genuine accommodation, still everybody turned out of some hole or corner at daylight next morning, in order to be ready—for the early bird in quest of the first worm; and in reply to the questions of our host, each guest individually replied that he had passed a pleasant night, and sleep had been sound.

It may be a very bad habit, but still it is the custom in the camps to commence the day with cocktails, a brew consisting of aromatic bitters, sugar, and caña, "to be well shaken before taken" until it froths up; for this purpose a small stick, with root attached, is used, which, when placed in the tumbler, is rolled between the palms of the hands until the mixture "comes to a head." This is supposed to fortify the human frame for the toils of the day; after which coffee, and occasionally cold meat, and biscuits are served, and later on a substantial breakfast. It is a matter of regret that these cocktails are so insinuating, for it is well-known that the "cocktail" system is the worst institution that has made its way into the camps, and has been the cause of more ruin and misery amongst British settlers than anything else in the country, not excepting the "seca," for these cocktail supplies never seem to run dry, and many a pupil who has been sent to learn farming has returned home with little or no other knowledge or experience than the brewing of cocktails.

The country we were about to search for game was some distance out of the beaten track, and as we proceeded,

some on horseback, others in the "patron," or host's buggy, we passed by many flocks of wild turkeys, deer, ostrich, and large Maguari storks (*Ciconia Magnari*), but these we did not attempt to approach, we were in quest of the partridge, a bird somewhat smaller than our own well-known species, but which, unlike ours, is a solitary bird, and most difficult to induce to flight, but they afford excellent sport, and in some districts they are so numerous that shots will occur almost as quickly as one can load. On this occasion we were more than fortunate, and by luncheon hour, when the cold "carne con quero" made its appearance, we had killed as many as our trap could carry, besides several armadillo, which had been captured on their rambles, and which are considered great delicacies for the table. After luncheon, therefore, as a large party of native estancieros were to assemble for dinner and discuss a subject of much interest—viz. the best means for checking murder and assassination in the camps, we all agreed we had annihilated sufficient partridges, and a start was made for home.

The natives employ an ingenious means for capturing these little partridges: providing themselves with a light stick like a fishing-rod, they attach a small horsehair noose at the extremity; armed with this they stealthily approach the bird as it crouches, head erect, beneath some tuft of grass, and gently lowering the rod the noose is dexterously placed round the neck of the terrified bird, which is then raised, struggling from the ground, like a fish on a hook; in this manner large numbers are captured and sent to the markets of Rosario and Buenos Ayres.

When we arrived at the estancia we found that a number of "The Rural Protection Society" had already put in an appearance. A "big dinner" had been prepared for them, and a great deal of talk took place afterwards with respect

to the business of the society. The members of the Rural Society met once a month, selecting each time a different locality, where a feast, such as they were now having, took place. The principle on which they worked was this: they agreed amongst themselves that, at a moment's notice, they would turn out and concentrate their forces at any one point in the camps where their services might be called for. And their services had lately been called into requisition; a band of Gauchos had been filling the neighbourhood of Pavon with terror, and had murdered a poor native woman and five helpless children under circumstances of great brutality, in which all the gang had assisted. The children had been murdered one by one in the presence of the poor woman, according to the testimony of one of the prisoners given subsequently, as a punishment because she had resisted with some determination the dastardly assaults of her persecutors. The Rural Society had on this occasion shown great activity, and had succeeded in capturing one of the murderers, but the three others who refused to surrender had been shot on the spot. The prisoner was sent under escort to Rosario for trial.

I was invited to breakfast next morning with a "Gaucho estanciero" living not far off, and as I seldom had an opportunity of seeing the interior economy and domestic life of these people, I readily availed myself of my host's hospitality. Breakfast hour was fixed for twelve, and punctually at half-past eleven I put in my appearance. The estanciero, a fine specimen of the native type of sheep farmer, met me on the threshold, and in the customary way invited me to enter his house. The señora, who shortly afterwards entered the room, was a stout querulous old lady, who might, judging from my experience of South American ladies, have been any age. Several females were flitting about the rooms in all directions,

coming close to the door, now and then, without actually entering. They might have been the daughters of my host, or they might have been servants, for, as a rule, there is no difference in the appearance of servants and mistressess until the dress is assumed. And all the household rise in the same manner, and from the same apartments, without thinking of such a thing as washing, in fact, they get up like dogs, shake themselves, yawn, tie a knot on their back hair, stick their bare feet into heelless carpet slippers, don a dirty loose dress or dressing-gown, and, unless a visitor is expected, this costume is retained until after breakfast and "siesta," or perhaps all day, or even for days together, I have been informed. However, my host was anxious to treat me well, and being an Englishman, to show me his respect for British punctuality, by insisting on breakfast appearing upon the table as the clock struck twelve, and simultaneously with the breakfast there came at the heels of the señora half-a-dozen señoritas, the very same on whose identity I had been speculating. They were of all sizes and ages, and each as different from the other as possible; no family likeness whatsoever existing between any two members of the family.

First of all we had soup, then the "beef and squash" the soup was made from. Next in succession came the stewed chicken and the "roast"—and then the "dulce," or sweetmeats. This last course is the especial handiwork of the señora or her worthy daughters, and is always, under every circumstance, praised and lauded to the skies. With the "dulce," green tea is passed round, claret having previously formed the principal liquid; the conversation, which was generally upon matters connected with the camp, was unflaggingly kept up, and no shyness was exhibited by any of the fair damsels.

When breakfast was concluded, my host took me out to

see his horses, &c., and explained the cost and strength of some new cattle "corrales" or pens which he was constructing; he also initiated me into the art of thrashing corn by means of horses. One of these "corrales," or enclosures, constructed of hard wooden posts (*nandubay*), from six to twelve feet in height, according to circumstances and requirements, placed closely together, is cleaned well out, and the corn strewn upon the ground. A "mañada of mares" is then driven into the enclosure, and kept moving round and round by horsemen amongst them until the corn is thoroughly thrashed, when the straw is removed, and the grain is collected from the ground. In the same way I had noticed brick-making carried on near Rosario; the clay before it is fit for use requires to have added stable refuse or straw, and horses are driven round in the same manner amongst the sloppy mixture, until a proper consistency is attained. This is hard work for the poor mares, and a brick-maker's "mañada" is indeed a sorrowful-looking troop in the suburbs of the cities.

Many feats of horsemanship are performed by these pampas horsemen during thrashing time, and my host related many incidents. He told me that bets were freely made amongst the men employed during the "thrashing," that they would mount, suspended from a bar over the entrance of the "corral," any horse which was shown them, letting themselves fall upon the back as the animals are driven out; a considerable test of horsemanship when it is remembered that these mares are wild untutored animals, and that neither saddle nor bridle is employed. Sometimes these horses fall down; but as a rule they rush madly through the camps, unhindered and unfettered, until they fall fainting to the ground, when the victorious rider, whose trained horse has been brought him by his friends, returns triumphant to the estancia

to receive the congratulations of an admiring group of spectators.

My performing horse carried me back in the same splendid manner he had taken me, and I did not meet any Legunas on the way to tempt my curiosity, or to try experiments with; and nothing worthy of record occurred until I arrived at the suburbs of the city. There, in front of the "quartel" or gaol, a large crowd had collected, and it was evident some important ceremony was about to take place. My curiosity being aroused, I inquired of a bystander what it all meant, and was informed that the sentence of the law was about to be carried out with respect to a prisoner who had committed a shocking murder near Pavon. This then was the result of the trial of the prisoner, captured by the "Rural Protection Society." He was about to be shot according to the law of the land; a law but rarely put in force. I determined to wait and witness the event, and giving my horse to a cartman whom I knew, to hold, I took my place amongst the spectators. I had not taken up my position long, before I was warned by an Englishman, who approached me for the purpose, that if I remained where I was, I should run the risk of being shot as well as the convict, but that if I went with him, I should be enabled to command a view of the whole proceedings. I willingly took his advice; and now the procession issued forth from the prison. First of all, in advance, were half-a-dozen soldiers; then followed the prisoner dressed in his ordinary clothes, guarded by two more soldiers, and accompanied by the high priests. When he arrived at the place of execution, which was a seat placed in front of a large tree, near where I had first taken up my position, he was placed in the chair and pinioned; one of the high priests, then the Bishop of Rosario, ascended a cart which had been placed for the purpose, and read the sentence of the court: he next ap-

pealed to the bystanders to offer up a prayer for the soul of a brother, who was about to be launched into eternity, and concluded by reading the horrible confession of the prisoner, and exhorting the people to keep clear of the law. At the termination of the ceremony, a file of soldiers at six paces, half of whom had guns loaded with blank ammunition, so that no individual could actually accuse himself of having fired the fatal shot, stood forward to fire the funeral volley. The prisoner was blind-folded, the command was given—a deep and piercing cry was heard, and every one expected to see the culprit fall over dead, but no, there he sat motionless as before. The scream had proceeded from a youth, who standing near the tree had allowed his body to protrude a little to one side in order to catch a good look at the proceedings, and he had been shot through the thigh, while the prisoner had been missed altogether. The youth, however, was quickly removed; and the eager crowd now required no further warning to clear away from the precincts of the tree. A fresh batch of soldiers was got in position; another volley was fired, and this time the cries really did issue from the prisoner—the poor wretch had only been wounded; this was enough for me. I was thoroughly disgusted with the whole proceeding, and angry with myself for remaining to witness it. I beckoned to the man to bring my horse; at that instant I heard the clear ring of a revolver, and looking up, I saw the prisoner's lifeless body hanging from the side of the chair to which it had been fastened.

The officer in charge of the firing party, growing impatient at the bad shooting of the men, had taken his revolver and mercifully terminated the condemned man's existence.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"A feast day"—Enjoying a peaceful siesta—The attack on the quinta—"Ave Maria"—The result of my defence—Reflections—Henley's quinta visited by the desperadoes—The result—The incidents related to my friends—Passearing grows monotonous—The inauguration of "paper hunting"—Choosing the hunting grounds—The fences, the huntsman, and the fox—The first hunt—The run and the finish—"A Vuestra Salud"—The end of the hunting season—A visitor from San Juan—A dispute with a cartman—The result—The assault—The chase and the capture—Mr. Finnegan—The wounded man—Before the magistrate—The threat—The deputation to the sick-room are unsuccessful—The cloaked figure in the dark—A disagreeable enemy—The burnished barrels of my revolver shine forth in the moonlight—A compromise.

THE day after my return from Pavon was a "saint day," or holiday. It was the anniversary of some great South American saint, in honour of whose memory and "for luck," a great many young Gauchos were named. These "feast days" were always busy ones at the Caballeriza Central, and occasionally I took charge of the house at the quinta myself, and allowed my men to come into town to amuse themselves, and on this occasion I determined to carry out this programme, my friend Plumes and F—— promising to visit me in the afternoon. It was about "siesta time," that is between ten A.M. and twelve noon, and not being particularly engaged, I was enjoying my peaceful siesta, when I was disturbed from my dreams by the approach of visitors, and thinking it must be my friends, Plumes and F——, I jumped up and looked out, when to my disappointment I perceived my house surrounded by a

number of Gauchos, of anything but prepossessing or reassuring appearance, and the long sword-like facons which gleamed from their belts added considerable significance to their disagreeable exterior. They did not address the usual salutation of "Ave Maria," nor did they even vouchsafe a "buenos dias," but at once called upon me to deliver up all my horses and other property at the quinta. The order was peremptory, and so sure did they feel that submission would follow on my part, that the chief spokesman attempted to dismount; but a well-directed shot from a double-barrelled gun which I had placed within reach at the door, and intended, as it did, to graze his shoulder, soon reminded him of the wisdom of the Spanish proverb, "Il sabio muda conscio, il nescio no"—"The wise man changes his mind, the fool never"—for he quickly regained his upright position in the saddle. This act of hostility on my part, done on the spur of the moment, without one word of parley, had the effect of scattering the braggart host of highwaymen, and they hurried from the quinta far more precipitately than they had approached it, and while they cantered off I discharged the remaining barrel into their midst, with what effect I am unable to say. When I reflected on the matter after their departure, I could clearly see that the quinta had, in all probability, been watched, and that the robbers had ascertained the fact of my being alone. But not far off, I recollected, was the young Henleys' quinta, and probably these desperadoes might visit them, catch them sleeping, and if so, take vengeance upon the "gringoes," in retaliation for the treatment received from me. I must warn them of the danger, but how to do it? To place a bridle over my horse's head, fasten up the house, put the key in my pocket, was the work of only a few moments; and after seeing that my revolver was properly primed, I jumped on my horse bare-backed, and taking a short cut, the back way, entirely

hidden from the view of the main road, by dint of whip and spur was soon in the presence of my neighbour "gringoes." I found them sleeping, as I expected; for what "quintero" does not indulge in "siesta?" But the hurried account of my late exploit, which I at once told them on arrival, quickly excited curiosity. "But what are we to do?" said the elder of the party. "I suppose we had better let them take the horses?" He was considerably alarmed. At this moment the sound of horses' hoofs was heard outside. "Here they are!" I said, "just as I anticipated." "Let us bolt the door, and defend ourselves from the inside," urged my neighbours. "Oh, no!" I insisted, "let us go out and 'pepper' them again," and suiting my action to the word, I walked out, revolver in hand, but unfollowed by any assistants. Surprise was now depicted on the faces of the robbers, and superstition had taken the place of fear. Surely I was the same individual whom they had so lately visited; and if so, how could I be at two quintas at the same time? "What do you want here?" I demanded, assuming as severe a voice as possible. "Nada, señor," meekly replied the ruffians. "Well then, clear out at once, or some of you will stop here altogether; you may leave this neighbourhood, for I have a way of getting from place to place, by the aid of the saints, without being perceived, and you will find me before you everywhere you go. So away with you—begone!" I need hardly say they were only too glad of the opportunity of escaping with whole skins. When I entered the house, and informed my friends that the robbers were all gone, they grew very brave, and assured me that they were prepared to assist me, had I met with any opposition; but be that as it may, my experiment was so successful that during the remainder of my tenancy I was never again molested.

When my friends arrived in the afternoon I related my

adventures of the morning to them, and they were only sorry they had not been with me at the time, as no doubt with their assistance a much warmer reception would have been in store for the Gauchos.

A number of my customers, who merely kept horses "por passear," were beginning to cry out against the monotony of merely riding through the streets or suburbs, and it behoved me to propose some more exciting amusement.

A great number of those who kept horses at the caballeriza, were from the old country, and often as they chatted in my little rooms at the stables, the subject turned upon hunting. Most of them had had opportunities of a good gallop across country, and looked forward to the time when providence would again permit them to join in the pleasures of the chase. What better could I do under these circumstances than suggest something, which no matter how far short it would fall of the real thing, would at least be a pleasant and enjoyable imitation of it? Why not institute a "paper hunt?"

The suggestion was eagerly taken up, and I was requested to draw out a programme, or, more properly speaking, to institute an inauguration meet, and issue invitations.

As will have been gleaned from these pages, by those not previously acquainted with the fact, the camps of Santa Fè are extensive plains, with few trees and no fences, it would be therefore very uninteresting to attempt a tame matter of a paper hunt there, and it was necessary under these circumstances to use some discretion in the choice of a hunting district. In the neighbourhood of the north of Rosario many abandoned quintas existed; for as it was cheaper to break new land in those days, these "quintaeros" removed to other ground, leaving nothing to mark the site of their former homes but prickly acacia hedges and wide yawning ditches. This then was the place for the "paper

hunt;" so, mounting a horse whose *summum bonum* consisted in agility, I sought these forsaken haunts, and by way of testing the line of country selected, measured with my little horse all the obstacles which my followers would be expected to overcome. I had one good stiff double ditch with hedge in middle, and some twenty open fences, and finished up with two deep and broad cuttings, boundary drains or canals within a yard of each other. This latter would indeed be a severe test for both man and horse, nor did I feel confident myself that it was practicable for little South American horses, until I had crossed it once or twice; but I determined to finish a few yards on the other side, where I would be enabled to watch the performances of the hunters as they came straggling in.

When the eventful day arrived, a goodly company had collected; great preparations had been made by those who intended riding "straight," and the condition of the horses as they returned to the yard, for the last day or two, showed that some "schooling" had been taking place. The arrangements made were that I should be "fox." That a trail of paper should be strewed from the starting-place; but that from the moment I was sighted, every one was at liberty to head me, and if I succeeded in getting past a point indicated without being touched by anybody, I was to be considered as having beaten the field. A pair of white gloves were purchased, to be given to the "fox," if successful, or the victor who succeeded in catching him; the winner to present them to any lady of his choice in the field. This last device secured a good many representatives of the fair sex, both on horseback and in carriages, which latter were drawn up in line, opposite the last and most trying fence.

Punctually at the appointed hour, at a signal from Plumes, who acted as huntsman, I, the "fox," from my vantage-ground, saw, as it were, some forty demons let

loose from Pandemonium, hurrying helter skelter in the very direction I had selected, and like a knowing Reynard I crept under the shade of a hedge, leaving as little possibility of a view as practicable. But very cautious movements availed me nothing, for presently I heard proceeding from a very forward huntsman, "a view hollo," and onward on the instant hurried the whole pack. I pricked my ears, and taking courage, stood still a moment as if to defy them or welcome my fate, but in reality only, later on, to increase the racing pace. I knew what my horse could do, for I must now assume my own *propria persona*, and knew well I should increase by this device the interest in the chase. I fancied I could almost then hear the murmurings of the fair occupants of the carriages and phaetons, as they held their breath with anxiety. "He's caught." "No, he's not; see, there he goes. Now he's all right! No, J. B—— is again close to him. How well his horse jumps! Now he is well ahead." "Ah! they will never head him now." If these were the remarks that issued from the spectators drawn up in line to witness the last struggle they were right. I had waited and given my pursuers every chance, but now, to all appearance, I had the race all to myself. "What can be the matter now? his horse seems to be pumped out. See how slowly he is going; why they will be on him in another minute." "Oh," says a very knowing voice, "you can always tell by the whisk of the tail. See, there he goes again, whisking his tail; he has not another 'kick' in him! there will be no one to see his tail at all in another minute." Thus spoke the wise ones and the prophets; but in another instant fair faces were looking upwards towards these spokesmen, plainly saying: "Get thee hence, false prophets!" "See, he comes, as fresh as a daisy!" "Look, look at him!" "Hurrah!" "Well done, Caballeriza Central!" These were no longer fanciful murmurs. They were the real, true words of encouragement which lead

men to do desperate things. I had cleared the two sunken fences, but not alone. J. B——, who nearly had his hand on me once or twice, had come boldly forward, and had not his horse staggered on the same bank which separated the rival drains, he would have wrung from me the honour of handing to the black-eyed señorita of my choice the well-merited—though I say it myself—emblem of victory. Next in order of merit came the huntsman. It was amusing to gaze back on the remainder of the field. Several horses came hurrying onwards, as if anxious to learn the result, minus their riders, while other equestrians might be seen in the distance still arguing with their steeds as to the advisability of proceeding any further, while half the field arrived by road, with, of course, the usual full description and account of every inch of the run, and how they individually performed their part. "Why, I was alongside of you half the way, only perhaps a yard behind," said a regular little humbug—who had not even been at the meet, but went straight to the "vantage-ground" on the sly, and then jogged on to the finish—as we trotted towards the Jardin de Recreo, a picturesque country inn, with an inviting garden and tables in the summer-house, where I was invited to partake of "iced champagne," to refresh the inner man. "And what a capital day we have had," said many voices at once. "A vuestra salud, Señor Don H. L. B——, and many returns of the day."

The hunting season lasted for two months after the inauguration, and although it tended to increase the number of those who kept horses at the caballeriza, it assisted also in reducing the condition of the hunters; and as it very generally seemed to be the opinion amongst my customers that the more you gallop and knock a horse about, the better condition it ought to be in, I am not quite sure I did wisely in instituting "the Rosario Hunt Club."

I had received a letter from one of the original Henley

colonists, who had obtained employment at Buenos Ayres, and had lately been working at some mines at San Juan, and now wished to spend a few days at Rosario. I was sitting at dinner when he arrived; it had been an oppressively warm day, and my table was prepared under the great shed in the yard. My foreman, self, and my guest, the last comer, J. M——, composed the dinner party. When the cart arrived from the railway station with my friend's portmanteau, my foreman, B——, rose from the table for the purpose of paying the fare; but the sum which he proffered the cartman being indignantly refused, a dispute arose, the cartman demanding something additional, and B—— asserting his knowledge of all tariffs, obtained during a residence of many years in Rosario, and refusing to pay him any more. At length the cartman became "personal," and at that stage B—— taking the horse, upon which it must be recollected the driver rides, by the head, led it out of the gate; arrived there, the now infuriated cartman, who had all this time been preparing for the moment, finding himself free, as B—— let go the bridle, levelled a deadly blow with the loaded end of his heavy "rebenque." The sound of the blow was distinctly heard where we were sitting. In an instant we were on our feet; the wounded man, streaming with blood, hurriedly passed us. I heard the shout of my head groom, as a brick whizzed past me, aimed at the flying cartman from his hand; he had witnessed the assault. Next moment, coatless and hatless, I was rushing in hot haste after the runaway cartman. He was tearing along as fast as he could; the route he had taken was unfrequented, and soon led us into the suburbs. Once off the paved streets, the ground, softened by recent rains, was heavy for the cart, and it became evident I would catch the ruffian. I had travelled at full speed more than a mile, and was consequently considerably exhausted, but not

so much so as to alter my resolution to secure my man. At length I was by his side. He aimed a blow sufficient to fell an ox at me, but by a timely dip it was evaded. In another instant he had dismounted on the opposite side, and stood at bay, brandishing a threatening facon. I was about to close with him in my rage, but fortunately at that instant I heard the sound of horses approaching, and the well-known voice of Jim Finnigan, my groom. He had wisely resolved, seeing that I had set out at once, and feeling confident, to use his own words, "that I would not easily give up the chase," to mount a horse and follow, and accordingly taking a bridle from the harness-room, and a revolver from the office, he had now arrived in the very nick of time. "Drop that knife this instant, or I'll make a gap in your head," now roared Mr. Finnigan, at the same instant placing a revolver on full-cock, in awkward proximity to his temple; and down went the knife. A torrent of abuse now fell on the devoted head of the prisoner, principally illustrative of all the luxuries in store for him when he reached the "Policia," where we intended to deposit him in safe keeping.

But how about the poor wounded man? On my return I found him in the hands of a surgeon, who, assisted by the new arrival, J. M——, was attending to and dressing his wounds, which he described as serious. "The skull is fractured," he said, "and he will require great care, attention, and quietness; he must be removed from the noise and bustle of the caballeriza."

Next morning, when we appeared against the prisoner, he was sentenced by the magistrate to one week's imprisonment, and to be deprived of his licence. On hearing the sentence, he replied, turning towards me, "As soon as I am free I will have your heart's blood for this!" but the magistrate took no notice of this threat.

At the end of ten days I was sitting at the bedside of

my wounded foreman, whom I had caused to be removed to a quiet apartment; the fever which had succeeded the wound had disappeared, but he was still very weak. We were talking over matters of business connected with the caballeriza, when footsteps were heard on the stairs, and the next moment a number of females entered the apartment. The object of their visit, they explained, unfolding a written document, was to beg of him, the assaulted, to put his signature to a petition asking the magistrate to restore the cartman's licence. The bearers were his mother, sisters, wife, and other relatives, who were dependent upon him, the prisoner, who had recently been released. But my foreman was resolute and not to be influenced, and they were obliged to retire unsuccessful.

Night after night, as I was returning in the dusk from my usual evening stroll or visit, the words uttered by the cartman recurred to me. For some days past I had noticed a dark figure, "cloaked," endeavouring to approach me unobserved. I had little or no doubt it was my sworn enemy. "I will have your heart's blood," announced this bloodthirsty mongrel Gaucho-Spanish-Indian, and there could be no earthly doubt he would carry out his threat on the first opportunity which occurred—always provided he could come across me unawares—for he knew I had perceived him, and would probably carry my revolver. He was right, I was quite prepared for emergencies; but this kind of thing was very uncomfortable. Something must be done. I had it! He had now been deprived of his licence a long time; no doubt he had nothing else to do, now that his occupation was gone, but prowl about after me; I would speak to him the next night I met him. An opportunity soon occurred. One evening, returning from a dinner with some friends, I came upon the "cloaked man," he was standing concealed in a doorway, having evidently watched and lain in wait for me. The burnished

barrels of my revelver shone forth in the clear moonlight, as I addressed him, pointing my weapon at his head. "You are now a dead man the next instant, if you do not agree to my terms. If I get you back your licence will you swear, that not only will you withdraw your threat against me, but promise for the remainder of your life never to use that knife or rebenque of yours in an illegitimate way?" "Se, Señor, I swear." "Very well; take this four real piece, go and drink long life and prosperity to the Caballeriza Central, and call upon me in the morning."

Next morning the ruffian called, and true to my word, I accompanied him to the Policia, where I made a successful application to the magistrate for the return of the licence.

I constantly met the prisoner afterwards in his capacity of cartman, and he was always most profuse in his salutations and his hat raising. No doubt, had I not compromised the matter with him in this way, he would, had a good opportunity occurred, run me through with his facon. These Gauchos never used to carry firearms, being afraid of them, but I understand they no longer entertain this somewhat superstitious terror.

It was many months before poor B—— had completely recovered from the effects of his fractured skull.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The English races at Cañada de Gomez—Racing and its effects on breeding—The race-course—Sun-stroke—On the azotea roof—The doctor's advice—Arrangements for departure—A six months' trip to the Old Country—A serious mishap—Consequences—Bordeaux—The Guanaco—My cousins—Wonderful effects of the voyage—Pleasant quarters for an invalid—A sad parting—At sea again—Monte Video—Carnival in full swing—"Typical drowned rats"—Bad tidings from Rosario—Confirmation of bad news at Buenos Ayres—Effects of gambling—Arrival at Rosario—The caballeriza, or what remained of it—The runaway's whereabouts discovered—Arrival in his presence—Arbitration—I determined not to embark in an estancia—Don Juan of Pavon—The end of the caballeriza—J. M. and his patron—Consequences.

THE English races this year were to take place at Cañada de Gomez, where a great many Englishmen had lately settled. Frayle Muerto, where these races had previously taken place, was now comparatively deserted, at least by the more sporting portion of the settlers on those camps, and the few who remained were much too disheartened to encourage the continuance of the usual annual race gathering.

Although I never kept a race-horse, principally because I took little interest in the amusement, not being a betting man; still I always attended these gatherings, where one was sure to meet so many friends, and being particularly fond of horses and hunting, I was fully aware of the benefits which racing has on the breeding of the equine species.

One or two of the animals about to enter the list stood

at the caballeriza; but I took little interest in their performances further than a desire to see them creditably turned out, and best wishes for the owners. In fact, I did not encourage in any way the "racing fraternity" in my business capacity.

On the morning of the eventful day I made one of a large party who proceeded to Cañada de Gomez by the morning train. The day was all that could be desired, and everything seemed to promise real enjoyment. I never felt better in health or spirits in my life; my affairs were flourishing, and I had been progressing "pouco à pouco," until I had at length established a substantial and profitable business. On this occasion I had been promised a mount by a friend residing near the course, provided I supplied my own saddle and bridle, in order that I might the better witness all that took place, for we had not yet arrived at the perfection of a grand-stand; and only ladies and a few of their immediate beaux and attendants were permitted to occupy the azotea roof of the "pulperia," the only building of any pretensions in the vicinity of the race-course from which a view of the proceedings could be obtained.

It was while in the act of receiving from the hands of the guard, on arrival at the Cañada de Gomez station, my saddle, that I was rendered unconscious by a sun-stroke, from the effects of which I did not recover for some time. I was, I believe, able to walk with assistance to the waiting-room of the little station, where I received all the attention which circumstances would permit; and when in the course of a little time, after the disagreeable effects of the emetics of all descriptions, which had been plentifully administered by well-meaning friends, had passed away, I succeeded in pulling myself together sufficiently to struggle over to the pulperia, and take my place on the azotea roof, I still felt very weak and seedy, although I mechani-

cally endeavoured to converse, and take an interest in the proceedings, until the train returning to Rosario would relieve me from my uncomfortable position, and deposit me within reach of a doctor.

When my friend, Dr. C——, called on me shortly after my arrival, he shook his head. "You will not get over the effects of this," he said, "for a long time; and you must take great care of yourself, and not attend to business for the present." Next morning when he called again I felt so much better already, that I could hardly conceive it necessary to remain quiet or attend to the injunctions I had so recently received. But I was again assured by my friend the doctor that these symptoms were deceptive, and that my whole system would require to be invigorated. "If you could manage it, a sea voyage would do you more good than anything else. Could you not manage to get away for a short time?" "I would think over it, and see what could be done."

J. M—— had been with me now, doing duty for my foreman, ever since the assault brought about on his account had incapacitated the latter from attendance at the caballeriza, and I found him most useful and attentive. Could I not trust him during my absence with the entire management of the business? He was willing to undertake it, and promised in every way to spare no pains on his part which would tend to carry out my instructions and promote the interests of the caballeriza. Nothing could be better. A line of steamers had lately been started between Liverpool and Rosario, and in about a fortnight there would be a vessel sailing. I would go by her, and take my "wounded" foreman with me; he requiring a change as well as myself.

Nothing could have been better arranged. J. M—— was very pleased; but "could I not give him some little interest in the business?" "His father," he said, "had

promised him assistance in the way of money if he could discover a suitable investment." Accordingly, after some consideration, I came to the conclusion that perhaps it would be better, under the circumstances, to give him an interest, as he wished; which would probably have the effect of stimulating him to increased energy and exertion, and would at the same time relieve my mind from anxiety, as his success would in the future depend on his own attention to business. An arrangement was subsequently entered into between us whereby, in consideration of certain payments being made to me on his order on my arrival in England, he would become entitled to a certain interest in the Caballeriza Central in addition to his salary. And with this understanding, accompanied by my wounded companion B—— and a "guanaco," which was intended to grace the deer park of a friend in Ireland, I set out for a six months' trip to the old country, at the expiration of which time I trusted all would be well, and I should once more take on me the direction of affairs.

We were not destined, however, to reach Liverpool without some difficulties, and while proceeding towards Monte Video, between Buenos Ayres and that city, a crack was discovered in the shaft of the screw, which necessitated our putting in to Monte Video for repairs. It was no easy or simple matter to set to rights a thing of this kind, and considerable delay took place before we were enabled to proceed on our voyage. A few days passed at Monte Video were neither inconvenient nor disagreeable to us, although we should have been equally as well pleased to have proceeded without any mishaps; but when, after a few days, it became apparent that very great care would have to be exercised in order to prevent a fresh breach in the shaft, and that five or six knots per hour were all that could be got out of the steamer, owing to the necessity for working with reduced steam-power, we soon saw that

our voyage would be a very long one. At length, at the expiration of forty days, we reached Polliac (Bordeaux). "Thus far, and no farther," said the captain, "will you be able to go in the steamer *Good Hope*, which proceeds hence to Sunderland for repairs. You will be forwarded by first steamer to Liverpool. Meanwhile, pray, make yourself comfortable for a few days. Your hotel expenses will be defrayed by the agent of the company." "But how about the guanaco?" I inquired. "I cannot take it to the hotel; I am afraid 'Messieur' would have him cooked." The captain willingly undertook to land the animal at Sunderland on his arrival. I could then have him forwarded anywhere I chose; but poor "guany" was not destined to adorn an Irish park. I found the trouble and expense more than he was worth, and by my orders he was sold by the purser of the steamer to a "landed proprietor" in the north for the sum of twelve guineas. Whether I must look on this as the value of a very fine specimen of the "guanaco" (*Llama huanacus*) I cannot pretend to say; but if it is, I am inclined to recommend my travelling friends not to embark in the trade as an investment.

We were obliged to remain a week at Bordeaux before we could procure a passage to Liverpool. True, we might have gone overland through Paris, but we preferred remaining and continuing our voyage by sea; and a few days passed at Bordeaux were most agreeable after having been forty days at sea.

My friends were quite surprised at seeing me. I had not given any previous warning of my intentions by letter, but this in no way detracted from the kindness of the reception I met with. After visiting for a short time my more immediate relatives, I accepted an invitation to join my cousins at the seaside, where they assured me I should have every opportunity of recruiting my health. The

effect of the voyage had been truly wonderful. I had regained my strength after leaving Monte Video, and by the time I had joined my cousins I was already quite recovered. To describe this pleasant time would be a matter of extreme difficulty to an unpoetical scribbler like me, nor would it in all probability interest many of my readers; and as I do not intend to gratify the minority by letting them into all my secrets, suffice it to say, that seldom has it fallen to the lot of man to be invalided (?) in pleasanter society than that in which I was destined to wile away the happy hours of my three months' holiday; and when finally I found it necessary once more to take passage for Rosario, never did mortal feel more sad or wretched than I did, when at length the dismal hour arrived for saying "adeos" to those I loved so truly—but it would be only for a time, I hoped. Ah, but little did I know, as the few words which were uttered at that parting were spoken—words of mutual hope and confidence—how soon, and how seriously, were reverses to overtake me.

The steamer in which I had taken passage on the return voyage was bound for Rosario. It was far more comfortable in every way than the ill-fated steamer in which I had set out. There were only half-a-dozen passengers on board, and Captain H——, the commander, and Dr. A——, the surgeon, were most agreeable companions. The passage was in every way a pleasant one. We arrived at Monte Video, where we remained discharging cargo for a couple of days. Carnival was in full swing, and the "Orientales" were indulging in their annual ablutions, and when we landed and strolled through the town, notwithstanding the fact of our being clothed in oil-skins and sou'-westers, we had very much the appearance of the typical "drowned rat" on our return to the ship. I expected letters from Rosario to await my arrival at Monte Video, and I was much disappointed at receiving none, and consider-

ably alarmed also, as I had heard from a captain of a vessel, trading from Rosario, that it was reported things were in a bad way with the caballeriza. "The young man left in charge, during the absence of the owner, had neglected the business." This was, indeed, news calculated to supply me with matter for reflection during the remainder of the passage up the Parana. These reports might be exaggerated, or there might be no truth in them at all. But there is seldom smoke without fire, and probably I should find something in it. However, I hoped, when I should reach Rosario, and once more take the helm, to be able to set everything right. I had brought with me a large quantity of saddlery, double and single harness, and a whole host of other articles valuable in my business, besides a handsome light four-wheeled dog-cart. But on reaching Buenos Ayres I found my worst anticipations realised. There I heard everything. J. M—— had been introduced to the "gambling palace," an institution started in Rosario shortly before my leaving, which promised to bring ruin and desolation to many a home. The system of gambling was the same as that carried out for so many years at Baden-Baden and elsewhere. A handsome and brilliantly lighted saloon was prepared for the "guests"; here champagne and cigars were supplied gratis and *ad libitum* to the players. The temptation was too much for J. M——; he lost more than he could possibly afford in his first venture, and double the amount the following night in endeavouring to recoup his losses of the previous evening. Things went on from bad to worse. It was necessary to be provided with ready money in order to "play," and to secure this, first one carriage, then another, had been parted with, and as the time drew near for my return, and his determination at any risk to recoup his losses became more and more necessary and pressing, the greater were the sacrifices of my property.

When I ultimately arrived at Rosario, it was only to find my splendid business ruined. The manager had disappeared some ten days previously, taking with him a couple of horses; no one knew exactly where he had gone, but it was supposed he had turned towards Buenos Ayres.

The caballeriza, or at least what remained of it, had been taken charge of by a self-constituted care-taker, who informed me of the further delinquencies of my trusted and now truant representative. It would occupy considerable space were I to describe all that had taken place during my absence, or to unfold the various deceits which it was necessary for J. M—— to practise, in order to deceive those who became purchasers of my stock into the belief that he was authorised to sell any portion of the property of the establishment.

I might have there and then set to work and regained the business, had I deemed it advisable; but before doing so, I determined, if possible, to discover the whereabouts of the runaway, and from inquiries I subsequently made, I ascertained beyond a doubt that he was staying at the estancia of a countryman in the province of Buenos Ayres, about seventy miles from Rosario, and thither I determined to proceed without loss of time. Accordingly, accompanied by the newly-constituted proprietor, and mounted on the best horses the caballeriza could afford, I started one morning at day-break. I had once before visited the estancia, when purchasing horses, and knew therefore more or less the way across camp. I did not intend, when starting, to ride the entire distance in one day, but as we proceeded on our journey, I found the horses so good, that I determined to make the effort, which resulted in our reaching our destination early in the afternoon, having only halted twice on the road for half an hour on each occasion.

I entered the house, on arrival, as quickly as possible,

in the belief that by so doing I should be the more likely to encounter my man. I judged rightly, for I pounced on him in the very act of escaping by a side door. He appeared much surprised at seeing me, and finally confessed everything. Upon the invitation of the hospitable owner of the estancia, I now remained several days. My companion, who was rather thin skinned, had suffered considerably from the effects of the seventy mile ride over the pampas, and had only been able to sit upon the hard seats which the estancia afforded with a rug or coat as a cushion. During my stay I was induced to accept, at the suggestion of J. M——, an arrangement to pay me a sum taken at valuation, representing an equivalent for the caballeriza, as it stood before I left for home. And this sum was finally fixed by three merchants in Rosario, who were well acquainted with the establishment, and the greater portion of this money I eventually received, but not without very considerable trouble and delay.

I now determined to remain a short time in the country, sufficient to enable me to dispose of the remainder of my property and the goods which I had brought with me. I did not consider myself sufficiently well off to embark in an estancia with fair prospects of success, and for several reasons, which I shall not name, I did not care again to embark in my old business.

I had very little trouble in disposing of my saddlery, harness, and carriages, and other things, and in closing all connection with Rosario; and having done so, and explained my reasons to all old friends—old friends who would have supported me had I chosen to resume business—I accepted an invitation to spend some time at Pavon, with my friend Don Juan A——. I had arranged with Captain H——, of the *La Place*, in which I had recently arrived, to return with him to Liverpool on his next homeward trip, which would be in about four or five months, and meanwhile I

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I might have there and then set to work and regained the business, had I deemed it advisable; but before doing so, I determined, if possible, to discover the whereabouts of the runaway, and from inquiries I subsequently made, I ascertained beyond a doubt that he was staying at the estancia of a countryman in the province of Buenos Ayres, about seventy miles from Rosario, and thither I determined to proceed without loss of time. Accordingly, accompanied by the newly-constituted proprietor, and mounted on the best horses the caballeriza could afford, I started one morning at day-break. I had once before visited the estancia, when purchasing horses, and knew therefore more or less the way across camp. I did not intend, when starting, to ride the entire distance in one day, but as we proceeded on our journey, I found the horses so good, that I determined to make the effort, which resulted in our reaching our destination early in the afternoon, having only halted twice on the road for half an hour on each occasion.

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in the belief that by so doing I should be the more likely to encounter my man. I judged rightly, for I pounced on him in the very act of escaping by a side door. He appeared much surprised at seeing me, and finally confessed everything. Upon the invitation of the hospitable owner of the estancia, I now remained several days. My companion, who was rather thin skinned, had suffered considerably from the effects of the seventy mile ride over the pampas, and had only been able to sit upon the hard seats which the estancia afforded with a rug or coat as a cushion. During my stay I was induced to accept, at the suggestion of J. M——, an arrangement to pay me a sum taken at valuation, representing an equivalent for the caballeriza, as it stood before I left for home. And this sum was finally fixed by three merchants in Rosario, who were well acquainted with the establishment, and the greater portion of this money I eventually received, but not without very considerable trouble and delay.

I now determined to remain a short time in the country, sufficient to enable me to dispose of the remainder of my property and the goods which I had brought with me. I did not consider myself sufficiently well off to embark in an estancia with fair prospects of success, and for several reasons, which I shall not name, I did not care again to embark in my old business.

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would get together a number of animals and birds, which he promised to allow me to take in his steamer.

The business of the caballeriza was carried on for a month by the individual who had taken charge of it, and J. M—— still remained in the camps. It then changed hands, but neither the new proprietor nor my successor succeeded in keeping the business together, and an opposition caballeriza, set up by my late head groom, finally took all the connection from the old establishment. As I shall not have occasion to mention the Caballeriza Central any more during the progress of my story, I shall merely say, in conclusion, that in spite of several efforts to reorganize the business, the caballeriza never prospered from the day I left it in charge of J. M——, and the site whereon once proudly and pre-eminently stood the well-known stables is now occupied by buildings, if more pretentious, hardly more associated with pleasant memories.

J. M—— remained some time at the estancia where I had discovered him, until left in charge of the place for a few days after the shearing season, he was seized with a longing for the gaming table, and having obtained admittance to the private desk of the estanciero by a device only known to himself, he abstracted the whole of the dollars obtained by the sale of the wool, and taking up his residence for a couple of days at a neighbouring pulperia, he drank and gambled the whole of the proceeds of the robbery with some passing Gauchos. On the return of the host, the deficiency in the cash was soon discovered, and the ex-officer of the Royal Navy was ignominiously kicked out, and although the estanciero was but a poor and struggling man, so impossible is it to get law or justice in the country, that J. M—— was once more allowed to go free.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The road to Pavon—The peculiar appearance of the sky—The "pampero"—The effects—The atmosphere clears once more—Questions and answers—Terrible losses—What means were taken to save the *débris*—Parting mixed flocks—Ornithological varieties—Chilian swan—Black-necked swan—Flamingo—Chorlita—Birds which puzzled us—Woodcock, by Jove!—Hunting for silver fox-skins—Treacherous consequences thereof—The little Indian horse—The bargain—A parting visit to Rosario—Gentlemen, sheep-farmers, and others—"Galgita"—My friend E. S.—A long drive in the dark—The consequences—The story is related to Don Juan—On board the river steamer—Bound for Southampton.

MY friend, Don Juan, had promised to call for me at Rosario, the first day he was in town, and drive me to his place; so that if I did not care again to visit Rosario, there would not be any necessity for my doing so, as I could catch the steamer passing down the river at St. Nicholas.

The morning was very cold as Don Juan and myself drove in his light American buggy and pair towards the estancia at Pavon; and certain indications floating in the air, added to the peculiar appearance of the sky, clearly indicated that we should be fortunate indeed if we reached our destination without having a practical lesson in "pamperos." Nor were our dark forebodings kept long in suspence, for when we reached the most open and desolate stage of the road—too far to admit of our beating a retreat, and not far enough to enable us to reach a place of shelter—the peculiar whirring sound, caused by the

distant winds which always precede these "pamperos," had already reached our ears, and we well knew we were in for it. We had not long to wait for the next stage; the whole atmosphere became black in a moment, and an ocean of dust, hurried along by a powerful breeze, floated about fifty yards overhead. During all this time we remained stationary, with our backs turned to the tempest. As the dust storm passed on, small whirlwinds, carrying with them clouds of blinding dust, ever and anon descended, filling every available crevice in their flight. To say that heavy rain descended in quick succession to the dust storm, would give no idea of the tremendous volumes of water which came pouring from the clouds, striking with the force of great waves, and literally washing every living thing before it when shelter was not close at hand. I had witnessed "pamperos" before, once, indeed, in the open camp, as now, but never had I known it to be so severe. It was no easy task to prevent our much-frightened horses from tearing away before the winds and rain, in company with the flocks of cattle and sheep, which could be but imperceptibly seen passing us on every side; and when at length, at the end of about forty minutes, the fury of the "pampero" had somewhat subsided, we were very considerably exhausted after our exertions. Our horses, too, had suffered much from fright, cold and wet, but the buggy presented the saddest sight of all, filled as it was in every part with liquid mud. It was some time before we got things to rights; the sky had again become clear, and but little rain was falling, when we once more proceeded on our journey. The ground was now very heavy, and our progress was consequently slow. The few articles which I had brought with me had suffered much, but fortunately we had deemed it better to leave behind us, until the carts from the estancia were next in town, the greater part of my personal effects.

"I wonder what damage has been done at the estancia?" remarked Don Juan, as we drove along. This question was addressed to me, but at that moment a third party appeared on the scene in the person of "Don Juan, gordo," or the stout—so-called by the natives in distinction from his master—the "capitaz," or manager of the estancia, to whom now the inquiry was repeated. "As far as I can make out up to the present," replied Don Juan, gordo, "we have lost about two thousand sheep; but our neighbour, Don Ignacio, has suffered terribly, and his man, from whom I have just parted, estimates the loss at about eleven thousand head." This was indeed a serious matter, both for Don Juan my friend, and all other estancieros, but there was no help for it. The "pampero" wind had appeared quite suddenly, and time would not permit of getting all the sheep into the "corrales," and even those which were got in suffered considerably, being drowned, as they crouched on the ground, by the quantity of water which had accumulated in their wool, and the tendency which is shown by one sheep to bury its nose in the fleece of the other.

As we hurried homewards, Don Juan explained to me that the only chance of saving anything from the *débris* was by setting to work at once and saving the skins of the dead animals; and in order to carry this out, messengers were dispatched to all the neighbouring "pulperias," to collect as many hands as possible, and in this way, before the sun had next day rendered further operations impossible, a very large number of bodies had been divested of their skins. By this means a great deal of the loss, as far as my friend's estancia was concerned, was mitigated, as a good skin at that time with the fleece on it was worth at least half the value of the sheep. But a great many estancias had been almost ruined, and, indeed, some had lost their entire flocks. These are some of the

little difficulties attendant upon sheep farmers and others on the River Plate.

The following week was entirely occupied in visiting neighbours, and parting mixed flocks; everybody was in quest of their own mark, and in this way a great number of poor animals carried away by the "pampero," had been recovered. Those who suffered most from these occasional visitations were the small farmers who rented camps, and "puestaeros" who tended flocks on "halves." To those who were wealthy, and who owned property, the evil, bad as it was, might be remedied by purchasing new stock.

The "legunas" and "arroyas" were now plentifully supplied with water, and large flocks of water-fowl of every variety were to be seen at all times, feeding upon the margin, or "pluming" themselves in the sun. It was interesting to observe the number and variety of the feathered tribe, as one strolled along the banks of the "Arroya de Pavon," on a fine morning at sunrise. The beautiful roseate spoonbill or shoveller—the brilliant colouring of its plumage contrasting to perfection with the water and the surrounding green pastures—the painted duck, "painted snipe"—the latter tolerably rare—all claim attention, while many varieties of widgeon, divers, teal, and moorhen or water rails are constantly occurring. There is a very curious wading plover common in all parts of the camps. This peculiar looking bird is furnished with legs about fourteen inches in length. When disturbed they ascend in small flocks to considerable heights, carrying their legs straight out behind them, which give to the body the appearance of having long slender tails.

I was very fortunate with regard to the season for sporting purposes. Nothing could have been more propitious than the late "pampero," supplying as it did plenty of water, thus enticing from impenetrable haunts,

those varieties I most wished to come across. My friend was very fond of shooting, and he well knew from long experience in the country all the best districts. I got a long shot one day at a flock of geese as they are called, but strictly speaking, Chilian swan—a smaller kind of swan, of pure white plumage and black-tipped wings. I managed to drop one bird, and the remainder, unwilling for some moments to desert their wounded companion, allowed me to secure several of their number, which I merely "pinioned" as they hovered overhead. I took them home, set the wings, and having prepared and fenced in a small enclosure of water, in a short time they became quite domesticated, and warranted my belief that I should be able to take them to England with me; but one day I had the mortification of seeing my half-dozen beautiful birds, feeling no doubt sufficiently recovered for the effects, and taking advantage of a stiff breeze which was then blowing, rise in the air and place many miles between them and Pavon.

In the same way I managed to secure alive a brace of the beautiful black-necked swan (*Cygnus nigricollis*), a bird tolerably plentiful in those parts, but they did not survive many days.

The flamingo (*Phœnicopterus*) was another and very beautiful bird, occasionally met with in these camps, but more numerous farther north and farther south. The peculiar structure of their beak is adapted in a special manner to their habit of feeding on minute mollucsa, which they gather in shallow water. The upper mandible is always lowest during this operation, and the objects of search are passed over it as a duck sifts with its laminæ; the action of the neck, by which the head is thus turned downwards and inwards, gives a most peculiar character to a flock of flamingoes as they wade along the shore. Nor is their flight less striking, the black pinions and roseate

four feet from the entrance. This would be the long-wished-for moment, and taking a steady and well-directed aim between these lustrous eyes, on most occasions death was instantaneous, and the bamboo and hook would be inserted to fetch the animal out.

On one occasion I had shot a fox in this manner, but not having my bamboo with me, I was puzzled how to get the dead animal out; the hole was large, tending downwards, and of sufficient dimensions to admit of my creeping in. This plan I adopted, and grasping the shoulder of the fox, attempted to get out again; but what was my horror to find that this was a matter of some difficulty, and in my struggles and alarm, quantities of loose dry clay came tumbling in upon me, and for a moment the dreadful prospect of being buried alive occurred to me; but finally, by continued efforts of the toes and wrists, I succeeded in extricating myself from the perilous position, and, strange to say, I had mechanically brought the fox with me.

During my four months' residence in Pavon, we paid several visits to the districts lying on the borders of the Indian country, where we had capital partridge and other shooting. I succeeded on one of these trips in inducing an Indian family to part with a very beautiful little Indian horse, about the size of a Newfoundland dog. This wonderful little animal was in every respect a little horse, in contradistinction to a little pony. At first the owner was very loath to part with his favourite, and not all the dollars I had with me, a sum representing more than double its value, would tempt him; but when we at length prepared to return, and I donned my Irish frieze overcoat, the covetous Indian declared his willingness to exchange the little horse for the coat, and quickly divesting myself of the garment I became the owner of the singular little thing, which we managed to take with

us a distance of nearly thirty miles, tied alongside the buggy horses.

It was my intention to take this little horse with me when returning home amongst a number of other animals and birds I had collected, but circumstances had occurred to necessitate my changing my mind. I had heard from Liverpool that my friend Captain H—— had been transferred to another vessel, and would not for the present return to the River Plate; and I therefore determined to remain no longer in the country, and to give up my intention of taking my little horse with me, and I finally presented it to Don Juan.

Before eventually leaving the country, I was induced to pay a parting visit to Rosario, where I wished to say "adeos" to a number of old friends; and for this purpose my host lent me his buggy and horses for a few days, at the end of which time I would return to Pavon, say farewell, and take the steamer from St. Nicholas. I was sorry to leave the country, but as I could see no really good opening for my small capital, I deemed it best to do so. I could with equally good prospects of success commence farming in a small way in my own country, and certainly the examples I saw about me in the Camps of Santa Fè did not encourage me to change my resolution. I could not find a single example of the gentleman farmer who had been successful. In fact, on the contrary, almost without exception, failure had followed every attempt. No doubt puestaeros and others who owned sheep on halves, and lived without any luxuries or liabilities, had made fair progress; and the same may be said of a large number of hard-working industrious Irishmen, who were content to live in the most primitive and often indeed wretched manner, and who in almost every instance had commenced life as puestaeros; and several of the men

employed on Don Juan's estancia had already saved many hundred pounds.

Two days in Rosario were sufficient for all my purposes. I disposed of my tiger and other property, and the only living creature I intended taking with me was a beautiful little Italian greyhound, for which species of dog Rosario is celebrated, and which I had promised my fair cousin in Ireland, in lieu of one ruthlessly sacrificed to the shrine of a baker's cart. But my "Galgita," although it lived to reach, and to become a great favourite with the young lady, was destined to even a sadder and more ignominious death; for while exercising with its mistress not far from home, it was shot by a neighbour's keeper, who, concealed behind a wall, fired at it within a yard or two of its mistress' feet, in mistake for a hare (?): a more cowardly assault can hardly be imagined.

While in Rosario, I met an old friend E. S——, who had been my first manager when the caballeriza was started. He, too, intended shortly returning to England, and it did not require much persuasion on my part to induce him to accompany me. In fact only two or three hours were all that could be spared, as we should be obliged to leave Pavon next day for St. Nicholas and Buenos Ayres; but this two or three hours were sufficient to make our start for a twenty-seven mile drive very late, and before we had proceeded half way complete darkness had set in, and it was impossible to keep to the camp track, and many times we were in imminent danger of being capsized. How we ever managed to get to the estancia in the darkness I do not know, nor did we get there without an accident; for when according to our calculations we were within a couple of miles of our destination, but evidently a little off our track, a severe jerk was felt, a struggle for a moment, and I, the driver, was pulled forward by the horses, which had broken loose from

the buggy. We had driven into a dry ditch, but the horses by a violent effort had pulled us out of it again, and in the effort had broken the raw-hide couplings which secured the splinter bars to the body of the vehicle. Nothing could be seen in the darkness of the runaway horses, but the trailing of the loose splinter bars, and the kicking of the horses could be distinctly heard for some distance. This was certainly a most awkward predicament to be left in; more especially as there was no other conveyance at the estancia in which to continue our journey on the early morrow. To leave the buggy we agreed would be madness, nor were we sure that even on foot we could reach the estancia. While we were thus musing, a bright light was suddenly struck some distance from us in the camp, and at the same moment a loud halloo was heard; and as the light continued to burn, it was arranged that my friend should move towards the light while I would remain, and by my calls and halloos guide him on his return to my position.

In the course of about half an hour he returned, and strange to say he was accompanied by the runaway horses and a companion; and in reply to my inquiry I was informed by Jim W——, a puestaero on the estancia of my friend Don Juan, that he was startled out of his sleep by a noise as if a thousand maniacs had been let loose, and had pulled up at his door; he cautiously had risen, and arming himself with his revolver and gun, had demanded in his sternest voice, both in English and Spanish, "Who comes there?" but as no answer had of course been given, he had opened just sufficient of the door to discover our runaways, which he instantly recognised.

The horses were now again put to, the damage temporarily repaired, and in a short time the estancia was reached, when the story of my last drive from Rosario was related to Don Juan.

Next morning a start was made for St. Nicholas, where we duly arrived without any incident occuring worthy of record. There we found the little river steamer in readiness to convey us to Buenos Ayres, where again we were transferred to the ocean steamer which conveyed us to Southampton.

CHAPTER XL.

Old England once more—Three years in the Argentine Republic—July in London — Folkestone — My cousin's inheritance — Hollymount — The meeting on the avenue—Shooting amongst the mountains—Our company—A very practical new acquaintance—A successful lover—The happy day is fixed—The wedding—I determine to visit Brazil—What I heard of Brazil—An appointment sought—Studying electricity—The mysteries of the syphon recorder—The appointment—At Liverpool—My associates—The *Aracaunia*—A jolly good fellow—Pernambuco—Bahia—The market-place—"Tommy"—Coming to an anchor in Rio de Janeiro.

ONCE more I found myself in Old England, after a pleasant and rapid passage, free to wander where I wist. My three years in the Argentine Republic had not been altogether unprofitable, and notwithstanding the fact that I deeply regretted at the time the collapse of the Caballeriza Central, I was glad to get out of that kind of business, as it entailed a great deal of anxiety and wear and tear upon the constitution; and although I was doing fairly well, and saving money, still it would take a very long while to accumulate a competency whereon to retire.

As I have already said, I did not deem it advisable to invest my money in the Camps of Santa Fé, as I heard of nothing but gloom, disappointment, and failure on every side; and as I could not make up my mind to pursue any definite course for the moment, I thought it wiser, for a time at least, to return amongst my own friends. Arriving in London in the month of July, I determined for the

present to remain there; after which I passed some time with my family at Folkestone, where I managed to vary the programme of the society of that fashionable watering-place by an occasional trip to Boulogne. But even this questionable enjoyment became uninteresting after a time, and I accepted an invitation to spend some time in the county L——, Ireland, at that dear old house, where some of the happiest days of my youth had been passed.

The old place had fallen into the possession of my two cousins as co-heiresses. The lands were let to tenants, but the shooting had been reserved, and I was now expected to keep the larder stocked with game, a duty I was well disposed to perform.

Hollymount, for that was the name of the place, was beautifully situated, surrounded on three sides by picturesque mountain scenery; and never did it look more charming than on this lovely September morning, as I drove up the winding avenue. It was many years now since I had last visited Hollymount, and sad changes had taken place. No longer was I destined to be welcomed by the cheery voice of my old friend, then head of the establishment; but I was not permitted long to dwell upon gloomy recollections, for I was met half way on the avenue by my two cousins, who had been awaiting my arrival, and never did heartier welcome greet wandering relative.

Before many days passed, I had visited all the haunts in the mountains where game used to be plentiful, and soon discovered that in regard to this item little or no change had taken place, and I was able to secure as good a bag as ever. Grouse, partridge, snipe, woodcock, and hares were very plentiful, and it was nothing uncommon to bring down twenty brace of snipe in a day's shooting on the boggy lands to my own gun.

The company consisted of my two cousins and an elderly lady who was staying with them; but I had been promised

a companion. A very nice gentleman, whose acquaintance they had made during my absence, had promised to spend some time with them, and he would accompany me on my shooting expeditions. I looked forward to his society, as my walks over the mountains, accompanied only by a man to carry my bag, were becoming dull from want of another gun; and when at last the friend arrived, I took an early opportunity of explaining to him that I had refrained from shooting over some of the very best ground, awaiting his coming; but alas! I was doomed to disappointment. Why did I not guess it before? He had a more important object in view in coming to the county L—— than snipe shooting in the bogs, and I was doomed to continue my rambles in solitude.

He was a very practical man, this "new acquaintance" who had appeared on the scene, and a very nice fellow too, and although he did not join me in my shooting for the present, he was evidently a sportsman, and knew all about it; and that of itself was a strong point in his favour, and I could not help admiring the business-like and determined way he set about "bringing to book" the object of his affections. Nor did it require an expert to discover that he was not likely to meet with much opposition, for without a doubt she liked him much, and in a very short time I was informed that my black-eyed cousin was engaged. Subsequently the wedding was arranged to take place in spring, and the successful lover took his departure. Meanwhile I continued my solitary sports, occasionally, when the weather permitted, being joined at luncheon by the girls, until, as the happy day approached, it was necessary to remove to Dublin, where the marriage was to take place.

A quiet and unostentatious wedding was soon over. I gave my cousin away. She looked uncommonly pretty and happy that day, and as I threw an old slipper for luck after

the carriage, as they drove away to his place in W——, after the *déjeuner*, I was not the only one of the party who truly wished them all the happiness they deserved. He was indeed a fortunate man.

It would be necessary for me now very soon to go abroad again. I did think of settling in Ireland and trying my hand at stock farming; but I determined once more to try my fortune abroad. Meanwhile, my cousin would remain with her now married sister.

I had always a great fancy to visit Brazil, and each time I had passed through Rio de Janeiro made me long more than ever to become better acquainted with the country. People said it was unhealthy; but I had been told by those I met at Rio, that much of the unhealthiness attributed to Brazil was exaggerated. However, I thought I would try my luck, if I could only manage to get some appointment there —any little thing, I did not much care what, so that while I was learning something of the country and language my capital would not diminish; for I knew it to be an expensive place—of that fact there could exist no doubt. With this object I visited London, that great emporium of information, and there I heard that a new Submarine Telegraph Company had been started, called the Western and Brazilian, which was to establish telegraphic communication along the coast of Brazil, and thence to Europe by the cables of another company just then being laid. They would require a number of employés, and, in all probability, preference would be given to those with a knowledge of Portuguese, and who had been previously in South America; but it would be necessary to learn all about submarine telegraphy and general electricity. In fact, without this knowledge it would be useless to apply. So, not being particularly lazy or particularly busy, and being very anxious to get out to Brazil, I determined to set to work [illegible] and with this object I attended an institution, [illegible]

rations, the mysteries of the syphon recorder, and other matters relating to telegraphy were explained and taught, and in addition to this a professor lectured upon chemistry, heat, and electricity.

In a wonderfully short time I succeeded in mastering all the various instruments which comprise the *sine quâ non* of a telegraphist's education. But I found it no easy matter to obtain proficiency in manipulation, as no doubt my fingers were much too stiff for the sensitive instruments, and perhaps it is only those who commence quite young who can expect to attain perfection. However, I had learned the general routine, and had gone into the subject and source of electricity, and now ventured on making my application. The manager was out when I called, but the representative in his absence promised to forward my application, and when I returned in a few days and found the manager in the office, I could at least perceive that I had been reported favourably to him. "We will be very pleased to give you an appointment to proceed to Rio de Janeiro, provided you can pass an examination," said the manager. "When do you feel disposed to undergo it?" "At once," I replied. "Very well; come here to-morrow morning at ten A.M."

Next day when I arrived I was taken into a room where several others were evidently about to undergo a similar test. Various telegraphic instruments and apparatus were distributed about the place. The principal test I had to stand was in sending and receiving messages, and having performed this feat to the satisfaction of the examiners, I followed the manager, who had been a spectator, to his office, where I was appointed as an assistant in the company at £230 per annum inclusive, for a period of three years. My passage was to be paid to Rio, and in the event of my remaining the whole of my time, I was to be again visited in London at the expense of the company.

Having completed all arrangements—the usual medical examination being dispensed with in my case—I returned that night to Ireland, where I had been asked to remain with the bride and bridegroom, now two months married, at their pretty place in the beautiful county of W——.

When the time for my departure arrived I had been at home nearly a year and a half, and was now leaving with but one regret.

On arrival at Liverpool, whence we were to start for Rio de Janeiro, I found some half-dozen others, with whom I was to be associated, already in readiness. The steamer in which our berths had been secured was the *Aracaunia* belonging to the Pacific Steam Navigation Company. A capital table was provided each day, and light dinner wines included; the passage was most enjoyable, several very pleasant passengers adding to the sociability of what is usually rather a tiresome undertaking, and the Captain L—— was a first-rate seaman and a jolly good fellow. Pernambuco was the first Brazilian port reached. The harbour there does not admit of the entrance of large mail steamers, which are consequently obliged to moor outside in the roads, where a heavy swell generally exists, and it is a matter of no little difficulty either landing or embarking passengers; generally a chair is employed, in which ladies, invalids, and nervous people are lowered or raised from the "whale-boats" at the side of the vessel. The entrance to the harbour is very picturesque, though the landscape is flat. The bright green foliage of the vegetation, the red-tiled roofs of the gaily-coloured houses, and the silvery whiteness of the sands, extending from Olinda, a suburb that first attracts one's attention on arrival, to the city of Pernambuco, are both striking and charming. The town itself is hardly deserving of much praise, but a drive to Caixinga in the Street Railway Company will well repay the visitor, and give a favourable insight into the

beautiful scenery and vegetation which the traveller in Brazil is destined to meet with at every turn.

Another day and a half brought us to Bahia; the scenery here also is surpassingly beautiful, and the deep waters allow of the largest steamers coming within a short distance of the shore.

There are two towns proper at Bahia—the lower, or business town, and the upper, or residential. When I first visited Bahia, sedan chairs, borne by negroes and sometimes indeed by Portuguese, carried one from the lower to the upper town, an almost precipitous rise of 250 to 300 feet; but on the occasion of our present visit the upper town was reached by means of a "hydraulic lift," worked by powerful machinery, in a groove cut in the rock for the purpose, and few of the sedan chairs, or "palanquins," are to be seen now. The environs of Bahia are very pretty, and excellent views of the bay may be seen from many parts of the upper town.

The market-place teemed with many living objects of ornithology, which possessed great interest for me; and here, on my return some time afterwards, I purchased "Tommy," a species of cassicus (*C. Icteronotus*), a beautifully-plumaged black and yellow coloured bird, about the size of a starling. These pretty little birds become so tame, that in a few weeks they will leave the cage and perch upon the finger. "Tommy" I always let out in the pleasure-ground for an hour every fine day during the summer, where he made himself very useful in destroying the aphides on the rose-bushes and other shrubs, readily returning to the hand when called.

In Rio de Janeiro these birds are sometimes taught to whistle various airs, which they perform very creditably and with great clearness.

In three days after leaving Bahia we came to anchor in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro.

CHAPTER XLI.

The Custom-house at Rio—"Bitter beer Ingliz"—The hotel at Largo Leoes—Telegraphists—Copocabana—The Emperor hauls at the cable shore end—A good example—Communication between Rio and Copocabana—"A city of tramways"—Passengers and traffic—The Botanical Gardens tramway—A remunerative investment—First impressions of the country—Temperature—Climate—Yellow fever and cholera—Rainy season—Soil—Seaports—Rivers—Messages of congratulation—The Palace of St. Christorão—In the presence of Don Pedro II.—One of the most intelligent and highly-gifted of reigning monarchs—A painstaking traffic-manager—The opening ceremony—The *déjeuner*—Master of the ceremonies—The impromptu dance—The business of the telegraph company—A blundering superintendent—Yellow fever breaks out amongst the staff—Death of the superintendent's child.

OUR first duty on arrival at Rio de Janeiro was with the Custom-house. It was necessary to get our luggage passed as quickly as possible, and the circumstance of the day previous to our arrival being Christmas Day probably facilitated our dispatch on this occasion; for the officer who had taken our luggage in hand, and who could speak a little English, allowed us to understand that some "bitter beer Ingliz" would suit the state of his throat very well, probably feeling somewhat parched after the heat, toil, and amusements of the previous "dia Santa," and was obliging enough, on his taste being gratified, to mark with a piece of chalk the whole paraphernalia of luggage, which magic cypher warranted the removal of all our goods and chattels whithersoever we wished.

Several proprietors of hotels met us at the Custom-

house, soliciting our patronage. Finally arrangements were made for the removal of ourselves and our luggage to a hotel at the "Largo Leoes," foot of the Carcovado Mountains, about four miles from the city; and this hotel, beautifully situated and surrounded by pretty gardens, became our residence for the present.

The party of telegraphists and electricians, of whom I made one, consisted of a superintendent for Rio, and some "manipulators;" but as yet the cable had not been completed, nor were the land lines laid from Copocabana Head, a promontory outside the harbour, about seven miles from town, where the shore end was to be secured.

It was several weeks before the cable-ship, *Hooper*, finally landed in safety the terminal shore end of the first Brazilian cable; and the good Emperor might have been seen on that occasion, with upturned sleeves, tugging nobly at those wires which in a short time were to place his great empire in direct communication with the rest of the civilised world. What a splendid example had been shown us by the great and wise Don Pedro II., Emperor of Brazil, by not only interesting himself in the submarine cable, but also "lending a hand" to drag it on shore. The little bay of Copocabana, where the "cable house" is situated, is picturesque in the extreme, and forms one of the greatest attractions in the vicinity of the capital, but hitherto it has not been built upon owing to the inconvenience of crossing the mountain which separates it from Botofogo, another charming suburb easily accessible by the well-conducted Botanical Gardens tramway. This difficulty is likely in a short time to be overcome, for a line of tramways has been started with the object of opening communication with this desirable shore; and some open cuttings and a short tunnel will place at the disposal of the people of the city of San Sebastião de Rio de Janeiro a most delightful and charming watering-

place, where the cooling breezes of the Atlantic will have uninterrupted scope for the exercise of their refreshing influences, a luxury which is seldom permitted to reach the more inland suburbs on account of the surrounding mountains.

Rio de Janeiro might now almost be called the "city of tramways." Every street in the city, with the exception of the Rua d'Ouvidor, that street mostly favoured by rank and fashion, and therefore held sacred in this respect, has its tramway; and, indeed, the Rua Primero de Março is so cut up and beset by one-"muled" tramways entering it from every leading thoroughfare, that it resembles more in appearance a miniature Clapham Junction than the rendezvous of passengers afoot, and the warning whistle of the drivers may be heard all day long; and yet all these tramcars seemed to be filled. The fact is, people are too lazy, owing to climatic influences, to walk, and if it is only to save a hundred yards, they will jump upon a passing car and willingly pay their 100 reis, about 2½d. It is surprising to see the classes of people who appear to be able to afford this luxury. In the same way every part of the suburbs is liberally supplied with similar means of communication, crossing each other in every direction; and here again these two-"muled" tramways are always well-filled, and indeed, owing to the fact of nearly the whole of the business population residing outside town. It is often very difficult to secure a seat at the busy hours of day, and numbers of passengers may be seen clinging to the sides of the cars.

To give an idea of the remunerative character of these tramways, I will quote, as an instance, the Pioneer Line, which has since given rise to so many similar enterprises. An intelligent American gentleman, on arrival in Rio, saw the advantages which a line of tramways to the favourite suburb of Botofogo would confer. The district was thickly

populated, and the only means of transit, a most uncomfortable high four-wheeled car, driven over the roughly-paved roads. A concession or privilege was granted to the originator by Government, and the levels and plans submitted for approval. So far, matters progressed satisfactorily, but thus far and no farther, for no one could be induced to subscribe to the undertaking, and the intelligent originator was looked upon as a kind of harmless lunatic. But at length a fellow-countryman came to his rescue, and advanced a few thousand pounds. With this, and a small sum subscribed by a very limited number, sufficient funds were got together to make a little more than one mile of road. This was enough—the traffic over this first section from the city to the "Largo Machado" was so great that another, and another section were added, without calling on anybody for another shilling; and at the present moment the company possesses some eighteen miles of road, and immense quantities of rolling and other stock. Traffic is never suspended night or day, and the few pounds which were originally subscribed now represent something like one million sterling, on which the fortunate owners receive about 15 per cent. annually.

My first impressions of the country were decidedly favourable, and it appeared to me that Brazil possessed many attractions for the foreigner, and numerous openings both for capital and intelligence. The contrast between this settled Empire, where life and property are respected, and where law and order prevail, and the Republics in the South, where neither the one nor the other exists, was very striking. In the former, a "paleto," or toothpick, is considered a sufficient protection to the traveller in the interior, while in Santa Fè it was unsafe to venture outside a town without a revolver. The Empire of Brazil enjoys two very distinct climates. In the intertropical zone it is hot and damp during the rainy season; beyond

these limits it is temperate and dry. In many places in the intertropical zone the climate is very mild, being modified by the vegetation, prevailing winds, and the elevation of the soil.

In those places where the greatest heat is felt, the thermometer does not as a rule rise above 96° (Fahrenheit), and only exceptionally does it fall in the coldest parts to 3° 2′ below 0 (centigrade).

In the valley of the Amazon, the mean temperature is 80° (Fahrenheit); this heat, however, is not much felt, owing to the easterly winds which completely sweep that region.

The maximum heat is always in February, and the minimum in July. From Rio de Janeiro to the Amazon, the mean temperature in the intertropical zone is 80° (Fahrenheit).

As a general rule, the climate of Brazil is healthy, except on the banks of some rivers, and in low swampy lands, where, in certain seasons of the year, intermittent fevers are prevalent. Brazil does not suffer in any considerable degree from those severe diseases which commonly thin populous countries. This was the opinion of the author of an important work, "Du Climat et des Maladies du Brèsil," who considered Brazil one of the most healthy regions of the globe, regarding it to be in the same condition with respect to the two Americas, as part of Italy to Europe; and of the many gifts which this favoured Empire owes to the Creator, its salubrity is unquestionably the most valuable.

At the sea-board, and some neighbourhing places in the maritime provinces, "yellow fever" has appeared as an epidemic since 1850, and cholera morbus after 1855, "ill-omened foreign visitors." Fortunately, however, the Asiatic plague has not again appeared with the same intensity.

The statistics of Rio de Janeiro and other populous cities show that strictly speaking the health of the population exceeds that of many European capitals, and cases of longevity are numerous throughout the Empire.

The climate, according to the latitude and peculiar circumstances of the locality, offers all the advantages which Europeans can desire; besides which they meet with a fruitful soil, offering every element for the acquisition of wealth and independence.

Generally the rainy season commences in November and lasts till June; these limits, however, vary with the locality.

Near the sea-board the land breeze lasts from four till nine in the morning, and the sea breeze, in a contrary direction, from ten in the morning till six in the evening.

The soil is mountainous, though less so towards the extreme south. It contains vast plains, extensive valleys, and large rivers. There are forty-two sea-ports, the most important of which, being the largest and most sheltered, is the capital of the Empire, with a circumference of one hundred and ninety-eight kilometres. Lakes, though numerous, are not extensive. There are four great rivers, of which the most remarkable are the Amazon, next the Tocantins, and the San Francisco. The majestic Amazon has a course of three thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight kilometres through the territory of the Empire.

Shortly after the satisfactory landing and fixing of the shore end of the cable, messages of congratulation were transmitted to the Emperor from the Presidents of Para, Pernambuco, and Bahia, but no public messages were accepted until the inauguration or opening ceremony had been celebrated. These royal messages were entrusted to me for delivery.

The Palace of St. Christavão, where the Emperor and Empress reside, is situate some little distance from the busi-

ness part of the town, and it was necessary to secure the services of a carriage and a pair of stout mules in order to ascend the eminence on which the building stands.

On reaching the palace, I was conducted without any ceremony into the presence of his Imperial Majesty, by an officer in uniform, who announced me as the bearer of cablegrams. The Emperor, who was sitting on the verandah enjoying a cup of coffee, in the society of several visitors, advanced to meet and shake hands with me, an honour which his Majesty usually confers upon the foreigner. The contents of the messages appeared to gratify him very much, and at his request I took a seat by his side. He then asked me a great many questions about the cable, in which he appeared to be deeply interested. And there could be no doubt, from the nature of his inquiries, and the knowledge of electricity which he seemed to have at his command, that he was no novice in that science, and I could readily believe him to be, as I had heard, one of the most intelligent and highly-gifted of reigning sovereigns. I remained for some time, during which our conversation turned on various topics, and when I rose to make my bow and retire, it was with a deep sense of respect for that wise man who rules the destinies of one of the finest empires in the world.

It was important, at as early a date as possible, to place the cable at the disposal of the public for the transmission of messages; so, before the completion of the land lines to the city offices, business was commenced at the Hotel Estrangeiros, Botofogo, where the inauguration at once took place. A similar ceremony had been arranged by Mr. R. M. Hyde, the painstaking and energetic traffic manager, to take place at every station of the company, all the nobility, merchants, and principal traders being invited to sumptuous *déjeuners*.

The signal was given by the Emperor in person from

the capital of his Empire, when he declared the cables of the Western and Brazilian Telegraph Company open to the public. After ample justice had been done to all the good things, with which the various tables no doubt groaned—I can only answer for that of Rio—and speech-making, toasts, and the recitation of poems by all the laureates of the day, specially dedicated to the occasion, the words which were spoken at each station were transmitted to Rio, and altogether the inauguration of the first Brazilian telegraph was a most brilliant and successful affair.

When the feast was over, I remarked to the traffic manager, "What a pity it would be not to take advantage of the quantities of good things that remained, and give a little dance in the evening!" "A capital idea," replied that gentleman; "and if you will undertake to provide ladies, and will act as master of the ceremonies, I will sanction it with all my heart." This I promised to do; and with the assistance of the landlord of the hotel, who provided me with a list of young ladies who would be likely to attend an impromptu dance, I issued my invitations, and a goodly number of the youth and beauty of Botofogo, Cattete, and Laurangeiras, fashionable suburbs of Rio, accessible without much difficulty to the Hotel Estrangeiros, honoured us with their society, and a most enjoyable evening was the result.

At first the business of the Telegraph Company was rather limited, as the last section of the connecting link between Europe and Brazil had not yet been completed; but when, in a short time, our offices were transferred from the hotel to our own legitimate premises in the city, and the European cable was completed, a great influx of business took place, and I was kept very busy. The chief clerk, or superintendent as he is called, who looked after the place and was responsible for everything, had

selected an aspect facing the mid-day sun, and not satisfied with this, had used the rooms in front, with the full strength of the sun playing on them all day. The position of the employés therefore, who were obliged to remain for hours each day in these stifling rooms, was anything but enviable, and not even "jalousies" were provided for the windows. The consequence was, that several of the staff became unwell, and the first case of yellow fever occurred. The patient was taken ill while performing his duty, and was only permitted to leave when the effects of the sickness became so apparent in the office, that the poor fellow's removal became an absolute necessity; and still this wiseacre, who had been some years in Egypt, and therefore thought he understood every climate in the world, would not even take the common precaution of disinfecting the office. "Yellow-fever!" he said; "no such thing; the man has been smoking too much; I have seen the same sort of thing in Egypt." But notwithstanding these his experiences, there is no doubt it was yellow fever, many cases of which existed in the city at the time, and the poor fellow nearly lost his life. A few days afterwards, the Egyptian had reason to believe that when in Brazil he must do as they do in that country. Had he not been so positive, but used disinfectants, it is possible the poor fellow would not have lost his dear little girl, who with his wife resided on the premises, but the poor child was shortly afterwards carried away by this fatal disease.

CHAPTER XLII.

An application for leave of absence—Carnival in Rio de Janeiro—Leave granted—We set out for Santa Cruz—My friend McM.—Difficulty of procuring means of transit—Attempted extortion—Fortune favours perseverance—The proprietor of the carriage offers to reduce his terms—An uncomfortable journey—We reach Santa Cruz—A shake-down amongst the fleas upon the floor—The "Juiz de fora"—The guide—The "permit"—The snipe of Santa Cruz—The result of our morning's shooting—Bathing in "cashaca"—The siesta deemed impracticable—Beautifully plumaged birds—Butterflies—Beetles—Feather-flowers—A matter for the consideration of Lady Burdett Coutts—The return to Rio—Difficulties of the journey—An overpowering sensation of sleep creeps over us—Our attempts to obtain a little rest—We try the shelter of a bridge—No go!—Vampire bats—We become the centre of attraction of a number of ferocious dogs—A night's lodging borrowed—The early morning—Acres of sensitive plants—Back again.

SEVERAL months had elapsed, and I had been working very hard since the inauguration of the Telegraph Company, before I ventured on requesting a day's leave, to enjoy a run in the country and get a little fresh air. I had heard of some good snipe-shooting at Santa Cruz, a district within easy reach on horseback of a station on the Don Pedro II. Railway. My application for leave was at first refused, as a busy time was anticipated at the office during carnival, which season was fast approaching. However, after carnival and all its gaieties, masquerades, and processions had come and gone without any great influx of extra messages pouring into the office, a coincidence which any reasonable superintendent would have foreseen during a season of suspended business, my second applica-

tion was more successful, and a day's leave was accorded to me and the only friend I had made amongst the employés of the company with whom I was associated.

In order that we might take advantage of the early morning for shooting purposes, it was necessary to reach Santa Cruz, if possible, the night before. With this object my friend McM—— and myself took advantage of the afternoon train, with the intention of having either a carriage or mules to complete the remainder of the journey, a distance of about twenty miles. On arriving at the station our inquiries were at once directed to procuring a carriage. These inquiries resulted in our being informed that the little village boasted of but one carriage, which would be at our disposal upon payment of seventy milreis, and ten milreis more for the coachman. For this money we would be taken to Santa Cruz and back—that is, about £7 for the carriage and £1 for the driver, for a distance of a little over forty miles, in the most miserable of vehicles it is possible to imagine. Of course this was an extortion we had not anticipated, and were not either prepared or inclined to pay. But the proprietor was happy in the knowledge that if we wished to drive to Santa Cruz, a matter of foregone conclusion with him, we had no other alternative, for saddle mules he declared he had none, nor could we find out from the people at the little inn—where we had now ordered something to eat, in hopes that the proprietor of the antediluvian vehicle would meanwhile come down in his price—that mules could be obtained elsewhere.

It was getting late when we had finished the food which was set before us, and still no message of reduction in the exorbitant demand reached us; so, under the circumstances, we now made up our minds to remain where we were, and enjoy ourselves as well as we could in our present quarters. In this mood we strolled some distance from the inn, but observing a number of mules in a paddock adjoining a

"casa de malhados e seccos," or store, we determined to make another effort to procure mules, and this time with greater success. The storekeeper would be only too happy to oblige the "señores;" his charge would be ten milreis, or £1 each, for the journey, if we promised him to take great care of his property. This we assured him would be our first thought, and the mules were supplied to us accordingly. While they were being got ready the obdurate proprietor of the carriage suddenly appeared on the scene. "Se, señor," he now said, "rather than you shall ride these wretched mules, you shall have the carriage for thirty milreis, and (aside) pay nothing to the driver." But as we had already made our bargain, we made up our minds to carry our gun-cases with us, and proceed upon the mules. It was now nearly dark; before us lay a good road, and the directions we received left little doubt on our minds that we could experience no difficulty in finding the way. It was not at all pleasant having to carry our gun-cases, as we could devise no means of fastening them satisfactorily to our saddles, and this, together with the difficulty of urging forward our mules at a reasonable pace, rendered our journey the reverse of comfortable or rapid. On each side of us stretched miles of undulating ground, with here and there large patches of "mata," or forest, the dark outlines of which were shown to advantage by the clear moonlight, for fortunately the moon was at its brightest. It was nearly two A.M. when we reached Santa Cruz, and as we had never before visited the place, we had no little difficulty in finding quarters to put up at, at this hour of the morning. However, we eventually succeeded, having enlisted the services of a "serrano," or policeman; but as some friends of the landlord occupied the only spare bed in his model lodging-house, we were forced by circumstances to content ourselves with a shake-down amongst the fleas on the floor. But we were too anxious to com-

mence our journey to permit of our indulging in much sleep, and when after a couple of hours we again rose to behold the dawning of the day, we learned from the landlord, who was already stirring, that we must first obtain leave from the "Juiz de fora," or chief magistrate, before entering the swampy regions, and that we ought also to be provided with a guide. The latter we had intended doing, and now left everything to the guide, who quickly made his appearance and took us to the house of the chief magistrate, which functionary, although in bed when we arrived, was good enough to send us a "permit," and thus provided we proceeded to the shooting-ground. A dog is unnecessary, as the birds are easily walked up. On this occasion snipe were not very plentiful, as the weather lately had been dry, but nevertheless we were not kept long without a shot. These snipe are solitary birds, a little larger than our own common species; they lie very close, and rise lazily, flying straight away for a short distance. Their motions are similar to our woodcock, but, perhaps slower, and more in accordance with the general apathy of the inhabitants of the country, and they thus become an easy prey to the sportsman. In the course of a few hours we had succeeded in lining our bag pretty well; we also secured several brace of duck and teal, besides some very peculiar species of water-rail about the size of a blackbird, of a grassy green colour.

The sun was now, as the sailors would say, "over the yard-arm," and it was time to get under shelter. We had walked for five hours consecutively, and considering the short amount of rest at our disposal the night before, were rather tired.

On our return to our lodging, we were advised by the landlord to wash ourselves all over with "cashaça," or white rum, a spirit corresponding to the caña of the South, in order, he explained, to guard against the

"febre intermittente," which is very prevalent in all swampy districts; we were then served with chicken broth, and the gallinaceous animal which produced it followed, after which we tried to indulge in a short "siesta," but somehow we could not get asleep, and rising again shortly, we wandered some distance from the hotel. We had now pointed out to us the Emperor's "fazenda," or farm. This imperial property was at one time kept in a high state of cultivation, and was a valuable source of revenue, but since the abolition of slavery, it has been comparatively neglected; however, it still produces an average quantity of coffee, sugar, and other things. We succeeded in securing a number of beautifully-plumaged birds, noticeable among which were some of those lovely scarlet tanagers, whose brilliant deep crimson and black plumage is so striking and elegant in contrast with the orange-trees, disporting themselves amongst the branches of which they are often to be seen. My friend's ambition was to become possessed of some of the magnificent butterflies that were hovering about, a very beautiful description of which, with wings as large as that of a good-sized bird, and of a brilliant light-blue colour, seemed to defy all his efforts, and he was finally obliged to acknowledge himself beaten. Several hundred varieties might have been counted by a connoisseur in entomology, but of course it is useless endeavouring to capture them without a proper net. Beautiful collections are made round Rio de Janeiro, and handsome cases may be purchased in the naturalists' shops in the Rua d'Ouvidor. Exorbitant prices are demanded of visitors, but by those who are known as residents they can be obtained reasonably enough. Nor need the entomologist rest there, for the beetle family almost rivals that of the butterfly, and the most gorgeously-painted little insects may be obtained in every variety of colour, from which brooches, sleeve-links, breast-pins, and all sorts of jewellery are made, and these articles

form a great attraction to the voyager, who, only after he has been induced to make large purchases of the feather-flowers for which Rio is so justly celebrated, is shown the beauties of the insect world. It was almost sad to think that it took forty breasts of the beautiful little humming-birds that flitted and buzzed around us, sucking the honey from each flower of the many-blossomed acacias and flowering creepers, to make one single feather-flower. Here is a matter for the consideration of Lady Burdett Coutts, and I believe it has not escaped that good lady's attention, but I am not aware that any steps have been taken to prevent this wholesale destruction.

As the train passed our station for Rio at four o'clock in the morning, it was advisable to allow ample time for getting there; and very fortunate it was we did so, as it afterwards happened. It was beautifully clear, as it had been the previous night, when we set out from Santa Cruz at eleven that evening, leaving thus five full hours for the road. We looked forward to a very pleasant ride, and plenty of spare time to rest at the little station before the arrival of the train. For the first few miles of the road we jogged along pleasantly enough, talking over our day's sport, arranging our plans for the morning, and watching with interest the myriads of fire-flies which flitted through the air like a shower of meteors, reminding me of similar nights in the pampas of Buenos Ayres, where these little insects may be seen in equally striking numbers.

A most overpowering feeling of sleep seemed to creep over me after we had ridden some five or six miles, and I found it almost impossible to keep awake, and I am sure I must have been literally sound asleep for some minutes, when I was awakened by a sudden start, as it were, and on becoming conscious, I discovered my gun-case had dropped I now called out to my companion, who had ridden a little in advance, to hold hard, and when I had picked up

the case and joined my friend he acknowledged that he also had been sound asleep when I called on him to pull up. Again we rode on in silence, and once more was a gun-case dropped, but this time by McM——. We both now had to acknowledge the impossibility of keeping awake. The fact was, nature was asserting its right to repose. We had travelled over a great many miles since leaving Rio, and had got scarcely any sleep, and instead of remaining quietly all day after the heat and fatigue of the morning, we had hunted butterflies and visited the Royal Fazenda. "If we could only get half an hour's sleep," we agreed, "we should be able to continue the journey all right, and should even then be in lots of time." So we resolved to seek a sheltered spot with this object. The thick hedge of prickly acacia on either side the road appeared to offer the most shelter, but on trying it we found the heavy dew which fell had saturated everything, and we knew that it was as much as our lives were worth to rest there. A wooden bridge over a small river appeared to offer next a resting-place. The stream was narrow, and as the bridge stretched over a portion of the bank as well, a complete covering overhead would protect us from the moisture of the atmosphere; but as the bank was too precipitous to allow of the mules accompanying us, we were obliged to fasten them to the railing of the bridge. We then spread our ponchos on the ground and attempted to rest, but notwithstanding the state of somnolence we were in, the swarms of mosquitoes which now attacked us with unsparing pugnacity and determination rendered sleep impossible; and to add to this, our mules overhead were so restless and disturbed, and the noise they made so great, that we were obliged to give up the attempt and proceed. As we ascended frem the banks of the river to the level of the bridge, we quickly discovered the cause of the restlessness and commotion amongst the mules, for we saw half-a-dozen

or more large bats fly from them on our approach, and on examining the animals we found that these pests, vampire-like, had been sucking their blood, which now trickled down the sides of the poor beasts from small wounds which these bats had punctured. I was afterwards informed that all animals allowed to remain out at night suffer considerably from the attacks of these little winged pests. What was to be done? We had little more than eight miles to complete, but still the difficulty of keeping awake was almost overpowering when moving forward. At last a favourable opportunity seemed to present itself. We had arrived at a farm-house on the roadside. Near to it was an open shed, containing new-sawn timber, which as we approached looked so very tempting that we determined to take the liberty of using it for a night's lodging; but what was our mortification to find ourselves the centre of attraction of a number of ferocious dogs, which attacked us with angry growls. We expected every instant that the whole household would be aroused, but fortunately this did not occur, and by dint of a little coaxing and patting, we succeeded in making friends with the dogs, and having secured our mules in the shed, we now lay down upon the smooth, dry planks, dogs and all, and fell sound asleep. We did not actually oversleep ourselves, but when we awoke it was three o'clock, and daylight was even then beginning to make its appearance. No one as yet seemed to be stirring in the house as we mounted and resumed our journey; and as our mules as well as ourselves were now much refreshed, we easily made up for lost hours and completed our journey in time. As we neared the station, the acres of sensitive plant, whose tender leaves had been closed during the night, were again beginning to open, and the early-rising inhabitants were shaking themselves and preparing their first cigarette.

Pl. XI.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Grand ball in commemoration of the submarine telegraph—The Casino Fluminense—Decorations—The "belles" of Rio de Janeiro—A sight for a *bon vivant*—Good wishes—An official blunder corrected—Badly selected officials—An unsuccessful sheep-farmer intrusted with command—The right man in the right place—My openings—The tramway check discovered—"*Bestin*"—The biter bitten—Heavy thunderstorms—With all its fury—Darkness sets in—The collapse—Trying to restore animation—A sympathising landlady—Superhuman efforts—The presentation watch—The recovery—Rejoicing—A tropical downpour—Wading through the water—The sea-wall at Botofogo washed away—The "Corcovado"—Plants and ornithological varieties—Primeval forests.

A FEW evenings after the occasion of our memorable experience of Santa Cruz, a grand ball and supper were given by the "people of Rio de Janeiro," in commemoration of "the uniting of Brazil with Europe by means of the cable," and, of course, prominent amongst the guests invited were the telegraph officials. The ball, which was attended by nearly fifteen hundred people, was in every way a success; the beautiful suite of rooms of the Casino Fluminense, where the affair took place, was thrown open. Perhaps in Europe there is no finer ballroom, and the splendid display of tropical flowering shrubs, which formed the only decorations was a sight never to be forgotten. The Emperor and Empress arrived early in the evening, after which dancing immediately commenced, and was kept up with great spirit "till daylight did appear." The belles of Rio de Janeiro shone with especial lustre that night, and very beautiful

some of them looked, superbly dressed as they were, and bedecked in those magnificent diamonds and other precious stones, for which their country is so renowned. Nor must I omit to mention the supper-table. A sight which would have gladdened the heart of the greatest *bon vivant* was presented, when these rooms were thrown open, and there might have been seen such a collection of luscious and enticing fruits as would have made Covent Garden blush. Speeches were, of course, the order of the evening, after ample justice had been done to these good things. And if good wishes could do anything for the success of the cable, it was destined indeed to be a successful undertaking, and to have a great future in store for it; but in the early days of this promising enterprise it was intrusted to persons of little experience, and complaints and discontent arose on every side. I did my best to improve matters, and to facilitate the progress of business in every way, and on one occasion succeeded in opening communication with the northern ports, on the morning of the departure of the mail steamer from Para, which had been closed by a stupid mistake of the superintendent—a circumstance which would not only have inconvenienced the mercantile community, but would have caused positive business losses, both to the public and the Telegraph Company.

The fact was, the principal officers had been badly selected; the superintendent was a good enough ordinary office clerk, but a bad business man; and the general manager, whose only recommendation was his being a son of a director of the company, had been taken from a sheep-farm, which had been unsuccessful on the river Plate, and intrusted with the management in Brazil of this large and important concern. The consequence was everything went wrong; but since the removal of these officials the company is in a prosperous state under the able direction

of a more experienced manager, who has been appointed by Major W——, the indefatigable and far-seeing head of affairs in London.

Major W—— had, during a visit to Rio de Janeiro, made many friends amongst both the British and foreign residents, and every one felt confident that directly the true state of affairs came to his knowledge important changes would be at once made, and all irregularities remedied; and I am pleased to be enabled to add my personal testimony that this confidence was well placed, and I am especially glad of this opportunity of recording that this gentlaman deserves, has commanded, and retains the gratitude of every employé in the company for the unbiassed manner in which he has distributed equal justice without distinction in all cases which have been submitted to him; and the heartiest wish of each member of the staff, and every Brazilian and foreign merchant who uses the cable, is, that he may be long spared to occupy his present position.

I had been promised the management of a large Brazilian Telegraph Company which had been established in the Empire on the principle of "Reuter's," and I had obtained leave from the traffic manager at home to accept the appointment when the vacancy occurred. I had also other profitable speculations in view, and altogether I felt sure of getting on well in Brazil. The American gentleman, whom I have spoken about in connection with the successful tramway, was very anxious to discover some check by which the frauds of conductors could be prevented, and had spoken to me about it, and offered a reward for a good practical idea for the purpose, and I had given the matter my best attention, resulting in success. The secret I imparted to the tramway proprietor, who guaranteed, on his word of honour, should he adopt it, to hand me the promised reward. I thought no more

of the matter for some time, till one day I found the conductors using my check, when calling on the American gentleman, I asked him to keep his promise. "What promise?" he inquired. "Have you anything in writing?" "No." "Well, then, you have no claim on me." "Do you know, Mr.——, what we call that kind of thing in my country?" I inquired. "No," replied the imperturbable American, "I do not; but I know we New York boys call it 'bestin'." However, I had not been so much "bested" as this individual, whose character as a successful and enterprising man I could not help admiring, supposed; for I applied to Government for protection in the matter of the invention, but as it was an infringement of the lottery laws, its use was prohibited, and for persevering in its use without the sanction of the Government, a fine of two thousand milreis (£200) was inflcted upon the company, and a sentence of two months' imprisonment on the individual who had "bested" me. Thus, indeed, was the "biter bitten." The latter sentence, however, I am glad to say, was subsequently remitted.

During the summer in Rio, heavy thunderstorms occur, and the quantity of electricity in the air interferes very considerably with telegraph wires. Nor is this the only enemy to the system, for during these storms the posts are often washed away altogether by the terrific downpours of rain, and large trees, torn from their roots, fall against the wires, causing them either to snap across, or conveying the electricity to earth. On one of these occasions, the current on the land lines of the submarine company was for some reason stopped, and in order to ascertain the cause I undertook to examine the line, accompanied by my friend McM——. The storm had somewhat abated when we set out, and although the mountain path following the line of posts was much cut up by the rain, and strewn with trees, we could perceive nothing to account

for a total stoppage, until we reached a portion not far from the cable-house, when we discovered a tree that had been blown down and rested upon the line. Having removed it, we were enabled from the cable-house to communicate with the city. During the progress of our walk, the sky had been looking very threatening, and vivid flashes of lightning were hurrying through the atmosphere. The rain had already commenced to fall, and before we reached shelter we were thoroughly drenched. Under these circumstances we did not wish to remain long in our wet clothes, so once more essayed to return to town. We had scarcely set out, when the storm burst upon us with such fury that it was with the greatest difficulty we were able to make way, and to add to our difficulties, darkness had set in, but still we determined to push ahead. During our progress we were obliged to cross a leguna which had swollen so much as to join its waters with the sea close by, thus intercepting our path, and it was with some difficulty we succeeded in preventing ourselves from being carried away by the force of the current. However, we succeeded bravely in overcoming all obstacles, until at the foot of the mountain which separated us from the town, and which we were about to attempt crossing, poor McM—— collapsed, exhausted by fatigue, and sank to the ground, unconscious of the fury of the elements. I endeavoured to arouse him and restore animation, but it was no use. I knew there was a "venda," or store, close by, and I could dimly distinguish a light. Thither, reluctantly leaving behind me my prostrated companion, I wended my way, determined to procure assistance if possible. On reaching the venda, I induced a black fellow to accompany me, by promising him plenty of "cashaça." When we returned my friend was still unconscious; but with the assistance of the negro, we managed to get him as far as the store. On arrival there, the

landlord, an ignorant half-savage, declared him to be dead, and refused to admit the body. He, however, allowed him to remain under the verandah. With the aid of my black help we now rubbed his body well with spirit, and covered him in a blanket, which the storekeeper condescendingly lent us; but when he revived, and we were permitted to carry him into a room, he declared himself to be too weak to proceed any farther, and I was therefore obliged to leave him, first having taken his wet clothes off and seen him safely put to bed.

My intention was to return with a horse next morning. Meanwhile, I was compelled to leave him to his fate. The storm had subsided a little, and I was thus enabled to make my way, not, however, without some difficulty. On reaching my rooms, my landlady, a kind old French lady, was in despair at my appearance, and her first effort was to induce me to take a hot bath, which was quickly prepared. "You are sure to get the yellow fever," she said. "You must go to bed for a week." As it was long past midnight when I disturbed my landlady, and I knew there was no chance of getting a horse before morning, I did take her advice for the present, and on awakening with the first dawn of morning I lost no time in preparing to return to the rescue of my companion; but what was my astonishment to find, just as I got to the door, the very individual himself, looking like one risen from the grave! "What! can it be possible?" I exclaimed. "Is it you, McM——?"

But there could be no doubt of it. After leaving him he had become worse, and fainted again; the landlord being a superstitious old savage, had then bundled him out, and by a superhuman effort he had managed to cross the mountain, after swooning several times, and there he was.

To put him to bed, and send for a doctor as soon

as practicable, was our first thought; but he was inconsolable. "I would rather have died on the road than that this should have occurred." "What?" I exclaimed. "My beautiful presentation watch and chain are gone; I would not have lost them for half the wealth of Brazil," he continued. "But perhaps," I said consolingly; "you may be able to recover them even yet." "No, no, there is no chance; that old storekeeper has bagged them I am sure." "Is that anything like it?" I said, holding up his certainly very handsome watch and chain, which I had taken from his pocket before leaving him to the mercy of a lot of blacks. His delight knew no bounds, and I feel confident that the sight of his watch, supposed to have been irretrievably lost, went further to restore him to health and vigour than all the doctor's phials.

Occasionally these tropical rainfalls do very serious mischief, and cause great distress when they descend with unusual violence. I remember dining with some friends in a remote part of the suburbs when one of these periodical visitations occurred, and I was obliged to remain where I was for the night. I had a particular engagement at an early hour next morning, and when at six o'clock I looked out, the whole garden resembled a small lake. I took the precaution of taking off my boots and tucking up my trousers, and in this manner I endeavoured to make my way, hoping soon to reach dry land; but on leaving the garden so great was the flood, that even the precaution of tucking up my trousers availed me nothing, and before I had proceeded far I was wading in water up to my chest. Nothing was to be seen on either side but flooded houses and gardens. In most cases the families had been obliged to seek refuge elsewhere; but as I waded my way down street, I saw in many houses the inmates standing upon chairs. It was very cold work walking through rain-water, even in this climate, and I would have turned back,

of relative import. If every wild forest densely covered with trees, on which man has never laid his destroying hand, is to be regarded as a primitive forest, then the phenomenon is common to many of the temperate and frigid zones; if, however, this character consists in impenetrability, through which it is impossible to clear with an axe, between trees measuring from eight to twelve feet in diameter, a path of any length, primitive forests belong exclusively to tropical regions. This impenetrability is by no means, as it is often erroneously supposed in Europe, always occasioned by climbing "lianes," or creeping plants, for these often constitute a very small portion of the underwood; the chief obstacles are the shrub-like plants, which fill up every space between the trees in a zone within which all vegetable forms have a tendency to become arborescent.

CHAPTER XLIV.

An important question—Fashionable districts—Bachelors' quarters—Slave servants—Punishing refractory slaves—Our quarters at Jurajuba—Rock oysters—The journey to and from the city—It's an ill wind that blows nobody good—Collecting information—A reward for good service—The free passage home—Visiting places of interest—The railways of the province of Rio—Nova Friburgo, Santa Maria Magdalena, &c.—Richness of the soil—Gold and diamond mines of Minas Geraes—A visit to a sugar fazenda—The journey—Ilha do Governador—Ilha d'Agua—Cocoa-nut trees—Illustrissimo Señor P.—The game of Taquara and neighbourhood—A planter's life—Pleasures and vicissitudes—The Carnaüba palm-tree—Its various uses—Regrets at leaving Brazil—My friend L.—His value to society—The voyage home—Madeira—Scenery—Funchal—Streets—Quintas—Creepers—Temperature—Curiosities—Story of the discovery of Madeira.

ONE of the most important, and, at the same time, most difficult questions to be decided by the business man of Rio de Janeiro, is—where to live? Nobody who can avoid it ventures to reside in the town, and the house rent in the suburbs is expensive. The fashionable districts of Botofogo, Larangerias, Santa Christavão, and Tijuca, are almost out of the question, except for families of good means, and besides the actual cost of house rent, distance has to be taken into consideration. No doubt Rio de Janeiro is an expensive city to live in, unless one is content to live in a very poor and secondary way, and this hardly suits an Englishman. Besides which, the climate of the city is decidedly trying to Europeans, and it is almost incumbent upon those who regard their health to live quietly and well. With this object, and in order to

enable a number of bachelors to occupy a good house, in a nice neighbourhood, several young fellows, whose tastes, pursuits, and means, are somewhat akin, club together, furnish the premises, and engage servants; and in this way they manage to live very comfortably, the only drawback being the difficulty of servants; as a rule, there is no help for it but to employ slaves, who are hired from their masters for the purpose. A slave cook must not be asked to do anything but cook; it is, therefore, necessary to engage a special slave for each particular service. Englishmen, of course, as is well-known, are not allowed to hold slaves themselves, and those they are obliged to hire are, as a rule, very lazy and disobedient, besides being often addicted to drink. Five pounds is the hire per month paid for a slave cook, who probably would not fetch more than £120 in the open market. If they do not behave themselves, a complaint is lodged with the master or mistress, who forthwith sends for them, and administers justice. But these whippings have very little deterrent effect on the poor creatures.

I had lately joined one of these bachelor establishments, situated at "Jurajuba," on the opposite side of the harbour from the city, and on the very verge of the picturesque shores of "Three Fathom Bay." It was a beautiful large house, and we lived comfortably there for a long time—bathing in the sea every morning, and making excursions on many occasions to the numerous oyster islands, which appeared at low tide, where delicious "natives," or "rock oysters," may be devoured *ad libitum* at all times, tempting one to make up for this almost prohibitory luxury in our own country. Jurajuba, no doubt, was a very pleasant place of residence when one got to it, but it was the getting to and fro which caused the drawback. In the first instance, on leaving the city, the bay had to be crossed in a lumbering ferry steamer, then half an hour was occupied

in the tramway, and finally forty minutes' walk over a hill completed the journey, and this operation performed morning and evening grew wearisome. However, "it is an ill-wind that blows nobody good," and it was while resident there that I conceived one of my grandest and happiest ideas; and in order that I should have sufficient data, previous to making a voyage to England to seek assistance and co-operation in carrying out my idea, I spent all the time at my disposal collecting information. It was necessary to preserve great secrecy with regard to my contemplated undertaking, until the protection of the Government, to which I intended applying, had been accorded me. And first of all, before even making my application, I must return to England.

The telegraph authorities were good enough, on giving a month's further services, to allow me to resign my appointment, and subsequently I was presented by the manager, in consideration of my past services, with a free passage to Europe.

Before returning to England, after leaving the Telegraph Company, I determined to see some of the surrounding country, in order that on my return I might be able to speak with some confidence as to the resources of the Empire. The striving and healthy city of Nictheroy, the capital of the rich and prosperous province of Rio de Janeiro, situated on the opposite shore to Rio, was the terminus of a large railway system, already partly constructed and in course of construction, which opened out, and was destined to open out thus further, the rich coffee and sugar districts of the province of Rio de Janeiro, and the neighbouring provinces of Espirito Santo and Eastern Minas Geraes, and these districts I determined to visit and learn their resources for myself. The rich coffee districts of Nova Friburgo and Cantagallo, and those districts stretching beyond Cantagallo, towards the margin of the Rio

Parahyba and Santa Maria Magdalena, had been described to me as marvels of productiveness. Without doubt they are very rich, while the low lands surrounding Campos and St. Sebastião, are equally productive of sugar, and the gold and diamond mines of Minas Geraes are regular "el dorados." Several of these gold mines are worked by English companies, especially those on the eastern banks of the upper basin of the Rio San Francisco. Besides gold, this province produces copper, manganese, tin, bismuth, iron, and other valuable articles.

Diamonds are found in the province of Minas Geraes, along the Espinhaço range to the limits of the province, and on the sources of the Rio San Francisco. These mines belong to private individuals, under laws regulating this special branch of administration. Emeralds, sapphires, topazes, beryls, and black, blue, and green tourmalines, called Brazilian emeralds, and the common zirconite also appear, with other gems of more or less value; nor must I omit to mention that rock crystals of great purity and large size are also found in very considerable quantities.

I next visited a sugar fazenda, the property of an industrious Englishman.

In order to reach "Taquara," at the foot of the Estrella Mountains, it was necessary to cross the bay by steamer, a trip, the beautiful scenery of which, traversing the northern and island-studded end of the bay, well repays the traveller. Every yard of the picturesque "Ilha do Governador," the largest island in the bay, as it is skirted by the little steamer, presents something of interest; and the "Ilha d'Agua," though much smaller, is not less attractive, surrounded, as it is, with huge boulders and flourishing cocoa-nut trees—a tree which never grows with the same luxuriance as upon islands. It delights in a maritime situation; in its greatest perfection it is found right on the sea shore, where its roots are actually washed,

but such instances are only met with where the swell of the sea is prevented from breaking on the beach by an encircling reef, or "boulders," such as surround the little island I speak of. No saline flavour is perceptible upon the nuts produced in such places. Although it flourishes in any soil, whether upland or bottom, the tree does not flourish vigorously inland, and I have frequently observed that when met with far up the valleys its tall stem inclines seawards, as if pining after a more genial region.

A short drive in the "Maua Railway" brought me to "Inhomorim," the first station on the line, where I was met by my host.

A ride of six miles on muleback, over a good road through the lowlands and marshy districts of Inhomorim and Estrella, brought us to Taquara, and the fazenda of "Illustrissimo Señor P——," as fazendaeros and others are dubbed by courtesy in Brazil. At that time my host had not been very long in occupation of his land; he was very hopeful of success, and intended getting emigrants to settle on the estate, to whom he had many advantages to offer. He worked very hard from daylight till dusk, and in every way I never met any one more deserving of success. I spent two very pleasant days at Taquara, and gained a good insight into the culture of the sugar-cane, and was introduced to several varieties of the "game" of the country, amongst which I may mention, for the benefit of intending settlers, very appetising under certain circumstances, the armadillo cooked "à la Republica Argentina," and the peccary, the partridge, zóo, and several kinds of curassow and penelope. There is also a peculiar kind of tree duck, which, unlike the duck family of any other species, may be seen perched upon the highest trees in the forest after being disturbed. They are a very large sized bird, and, in season, are very fat, plentiful, and delicious.

My friend was enthusiastically enamoured with the life of a sugar-planter; but like everything else, there was a dark side to the picture, and intermittent fevers and ague were constant visitors.

The "mato," or forest surrounding Taquara, contained many valuable specimens; but what part of Brazil does not? and even a cursory glance at the contents of these forests would fill a volume. Probably the most attractive of these tropical growths are the palms, of which there are many varieties, equally useful and ornamental. A description of one of the most useful trees in Brazil belonging to this family may not be uninteresting. It is known in Brazil by the name Carnauba (*Copernicia cerifera*) and grows in the province of Ceara, Rio Grande do Norte, and Piahy, and some neighbouring provinces, uncultured.

Perhaps in no other region is a tree to be found which can be employed for so many and varied purposes. It resists intense and protracted droughts—always green and vigorous. Its roots produce the same medicinal effects as sarsaparilla. The stem affords strong, light fibres, which acquire a beautiful lustre, and also serves for joists, rafters, and other materials for building purposes, and as stakes for fences.

From the "palmetto," or palm-cabbage, which when young is much esteemed as a nutritious vegetable, wine and vinegar are made, and saccharine matter is also extracted; also large quantities of starch, resembling and having the same properties and taste as sago, and which has often served as food for the inhabitants of those districts in times of extreme dearth.

The fruit serves as food for cattle. From the wood of the stem musical instruments, water-tubes, and pumps are made. The tender fibrous substance from the core of the stem is a perfect substitute for cork. The pulp of the fruit has an agreeable flavour, and the nut, considerably oleaginous and

emulsive, roasted and powdered, is used as coffee by persons in the interior.

From the stem a kind of flour resembling maizena, and a white liquid similar to the milk of the cocoa-nut, are extracted.

From the fibrous bark, salt and alkali, employed in the manufacture of common soap, are extracted; and mats, hats, baskets, and brooms are made. A considerable quantity of this straw is exported to Europe, where it is employed in the manufacture of fine hats, some of which afterwards reach Brazil. The value of the export is £100,000.

Finally, the leaves give wax, employed in the manufacture of candles, extensively consumed in the northern provinces. From two districts in that of Rio Grande do Norte alone, 3,201 tons are annually exported over and above the home consumption.

During my stay in Brazil, I made a great many friends, and experienced much hospitality, civility, and kindness; and when taking leave of the many good fellows who came to say farewell, it was only the knowledge of my intention again shortly to return, that allowed me to anticipate a pleasant voyage. My greatest friend, and the only one I had confided my secret to, was a rising young fellow then employed in a merchant's house, in whom I reposed every confidence; a trust which experience has since proved to have been worthily placed, and which I hope will long be mutually continued.

My friend L—— I have always looked upon as one of the brightest and better-educated of those with whom I was at that period associated. A linguist, speaking grammatically four or five different European languages; a musician of extreme taste and culture; a dramatist and poet; a fluent speaker, ready writer, and a true friend; these were the virtues and accomplishments prominent in the character and disposition of my friend. Nor did they by any

means complete a catalogue, which rendered him as valuable to society in the city and suburbs of Rio de Janerio, as the *Carnauba Palm* to the northern provinces.

With the exception of an unexpected call at Madeira, rendered necessary by our running short of coal, nothing occurred on the homeward voyage worthy of note. I had always wished to visit Madeira, of which I had heard so much, and at last an opportunity had occurred, and although the time at our disposal on shore was necessarily short, I made the most of my time.

Madeira is the chief of a small group of islands, accounted an integral part of the kingdom of Portugal in European computation, but whose geographical position in the north of Africa links them with Africa, from which at the nearest point it is 320 miles. In the highway of intercourse between the north and south, the position of Madeira is intermediate between summer and winter.

The scenery of this beautiful island, as it is approached by steamer, is grand and picturesque in the extreme. The mountains on two sides rise immediately and steeply from the shore; but on the western side a space of ground comparatively level intervenes between Funchal and the limiting elevations beyond. These mountains, which attain an average altitude of 4,000 feet, are bounded by ponderous abutments from the central range, and are covered with a luxuriance of vegetation truly astonishing; the cedar, laurel, vinhatico asevedo, aderno, pãobranco, and dragon-tree, intermingled with those beautiful shrubs, the folhado, faya, urze, myrtle, and uveira, forming thus one continuous forest, carpeted by innumerable and diversified plants, both flowering and odoriferous; the arbutus mingling with the herbarea, the feto, musco, and ajanco, in the midst of which may be seen the silva, era, carriola, the alegro campo, and other evergreens and creeping plants, which weave their festoons from branch to branch, and give

shade to a lovely land clothed with vegetation, and force to innumerable springs of pure and salubrious water. All this evergreen vegetation, viewed from the deck of an approaching steamer, with the clear blue water intervening, lends an enchantment to the view, which is crowned when the anchorage in Funchal Bay is reached.

Funchal, the capital of the island, is situated on the southern shore, where the continuity of a generally precipitous coast is broken by the concurrence of three important mountain streams. The bay is formed by a small inflection of the coast line, and from the stony beach steep acclivities radiate to enclose a deep and spacious amphitheatre.

The district of Funchal, the city of which is third in importance in the kingdom of Portugal, is inhabited by 30,000 persons, whose white-turreted houses are massed together on the sea-shore and upon the terraced slopes of the surrounding mountains. The town itself is not pretty either in special features or general arrangements, but it is essentially foreign looking, and moreover unlike the foreign and familiar cities of the continent of Europe. The district, however, is charming from any point, and the various views around Funchal are largely characterized by the beautiful and fresh appearance of the city, shining with its white houses and churches on the purple cliffs, the dark blue water of the ocean, and the surrounding luxuriance of vegetation.

The streets of the town are marked by little variety or animation. There are no wheel carriages, few notable shops or public attractions, and the fashionables of Portuguese society do not habitually appear out of doors. The most popular lounge, the Praça Constitutião, faces the cathedral in the centre of the town, and is furnished with comfortable seats. In this place, I understand, on certain days a military band plays throughout the winter to a large concourse of people.

Many of the quintas are very pretty and charmingly situated, overlooking the sea and city from various points and altitudes, and standing in the midst of their own sunny gardens and vineyards. Almost every house in Funchal has its own small garden plot; the banana, custard apple, mango, guava, and many others of a tropical character, besides many varieties familiar to northern climates, abound everywhere, and a display of gorgeous creepers, chiefly of roses, bignonias, bougainvilleas, all mingled together, and lining the walls and trelisses in a climate which favours their most complete development, the average heat of summer being seventy degrees, while the mean temperature of winter is always above sixty degrees, is, perhaps, of all others the most striking picture of Madeira gardening.

A visit to Madeira was a very pleasant change from the monotony of a voyage I had now made several times, to and from South America, when the usual coaling station had been the Island of St. Vincent, and having made some purchases in the way of feather-flowers, from the feathers of sea-birds, quite different and inferior to those of Rio de Janeiro, workboxes made of the different woods indigenous to the island, and other articles, we again resumed our voyage, pleased and refreshed by our run on shore.

During the progress of our trip to Southampton, I read the following anecdote relative to the discovery of Madeira, which at the same time that it may not be uninteresting, is *a propos* while on the subject, and will wile away the time to Southampton :—

"In the reign of Edward III. a young man of good family, named Robert Machin, had the misfortune to become enamoured of a young lady, the wealth and rank of whose parents were so far superior to his own, that they treated his pretensions with disdain. To avoid his impor-

tunities they obtained from the king an order for his imprisonment, and in the interval united their daughter to a nobleman whose station was more suited to maintain the dignity of the family. As the lady, whose name was Anne d'Arfet, or Dorset, reciprocated Machin's affection, he was no sooner released from prison than he determined on carrying her off.

"By the aid of a friend, who contrived to gain admittance as groom into the lady's family, which was established at Bristol, this plan was finally effected, and from Bristol they set sail together in a vessel which Machin had already provided and manned for the purpose. The intention was to sail for France, but a north-east wind carried them off that coast, and after thirteen days driving before a tempest, they caught sight of an island, on which they landed. They found it uninhabited, but well wooded and watered, and eminently suited for cultivation. For three days they enjoyed the peacefulness of security, and while some explored the interior, others in the ship examined the contour of the coast; but on the third night they were overtaken by a storm, and driven on the coast of Africa. The anxiety and suffering which the unhappy lady had undergone found their culmination in this disaster, and after three days of total mental prostration she expired. She was buried at the foot of the altar, which had been erected in gratitude on their arrival, and on the fifth day after her death Machin also was found dead on the grave of his mistress. The survivors buried him, and then embarked in the ship's boats, and on reaching the coast of Africa were carried before the King of Morocco, by whom they were thrown into prison. In the same unfortunate circumstances they encountered their missing companions, who had previously been carried away in the ship.

"Amongst the fellow-captives was one Juan de Morales, a native of Seville, a good seaman, and originally a pilot, to

whom they gave a description of the land they had discovered. Now on the 5th March, 1416, died Don Sancho, the youngest son of Prince Ferdinand of Aragon, and by his will he left a large sum for the ransom of Christian captives from Morocco. Amongst those who were redeemed was this Juan de Morales, but the vessel which brought him over was captured by the Portuguese navigator, João Gonsalvez Zarco. From pity, however, the latter liberated the unfortunate captives, reserving only Morales, whose experience in nautical matters he thought might be of service to his master, Prince Henry. This Zarco had, as Barros the historian states, gone out in company with Tristrim Vaz Teixeyra to explore the west coast of Africa, and had been driven by a storm on the Island of Porto Santo. This appears to have occurred at the close of 1418 or beginning of 1419. From Morales he heard the account of Machin's discovery, and with the permission of the Prince, and under the guidance of Morales, he set sail, and made the important discovery of the Island of Madeira,* to one-half of which he gave the name of Funchal, and to the other that of Machico."

The latter part of this curious history brings us to the re-discovery of Madeira as generally accepted. Zarco was a famous captain in the service of Prince Henry of Portugal, and his name had become formidable from daring exploits in warfare and the early use of artillery at sea. In the year following the accidental discovery of Porto Santo, when Prince Henry was sent to colonise that island, the attention of Zarco was drawn to a dark cloud which perpetually rested on the water towards the south-west. Acting on the conjecture of the pilot Morales, that the cloud might conceal an island, though not without the serious superstitions of his confederates, he set sail in the direction of the fog, which he found to diminish eastward, and at

* Signifying "wood."

length to lift and reveal the outline of Madeira. Guided again by Morales, he found the relics of the Machin party in a valley, which was called Machico, and where at the present day, in a chapel supposed to be built on the grave of Machin, the cedarwood of a cross, believed to have been left by the survivors, is still shown with the fullest reverence and confidence in its authenticity.

CHAPTER XLV.

The greatness and grandeur of Brazil—Area—Population—Slaves—Aborigines—Treatment of slaves—Products of the country—Industry—Extent of grazing territory—Metals—Railways—Provincial and imperial guarantees—The amount guaranteed upon—Railways already constructed—The richest province in the empire—Railways terminating at Nictheroy—Progress temporarily interrupted—Various proposals for and means of crossing the harbour of Rio—Existing traffic—A profitable enterprise—A grand idea.

THE intelligent traveller who has visited Brazil cannot but have been impressed with the greatness, expanse, and grandeur of that empire. Its boundless resources, limitless prairies, fertile valleys, irrigated by abundant and wholesome waters, the freedom and independence of its constitutional government, presided over by the wise and good Don Pedro II., are facts which must invariably lead to the conclusion that Brazil, at no distant future, will doubtless rank amongst the richest and most prosperous of civilised nations.

The empire of Brazil covers one-fifteenth of the terrestrial surface of the globe, one-fifth of the new world, and three-sevenths of South America. The population is about twelve millions, inclusive of two millions of wild Aborigines and one and a half millions of slaves.

These slaves are generally humanely treated, and properly fed, living in good huts, and on some estates they even have plots of ground, which they cultivate, and sell the products, being allowed to keep the profits, which they

apply to the purchasing of their freedom; their value being fixed or determined by a magistrate.

By virtue of a law passed in 1871, no more slaves are born in Brazil, and slavery is fast disappearing. An emancipation fund has also been created, which is annually employed in the liberation of slaves belonging to private individuals.

Coffee, sugar, cotton, tobacco, rice, and maize, are amongst the most valuable products of the country. The advantages obtained from the culture of the coffee-tree are evident to all who know, even though imperfectly, the results which it has produced in the empire; in fact this article, the principal of Brazilian agriculture, is produced in larger quantities than in any other country, and it is now beginning to be acknowledged that in quality the Brazilian berry is unsurpassed.

Next in importance comes sugar, which is grown in large quantities all over the empire. In the province of Mato Grosso, the sugar-cane grows so luxuriantly on the banks of the rivers, that it is often necessary to thin the plantations in order to check the excessive production. In that province there are plantations forty years old, still vigorous. In the rich province of Rio de Janeiro there are large sugar-mills at Quissamã, near Macahé, which are a great boon to the smaller fazenderios, who cannot afford machinery, and a direct encouragement to the husbandman. Mills of a similar description have been established in the northern provinces with great success, especially in Rio Grande do Norte.

Excellent results are obtained from the culture of cotton, which, however, chiefly interests small planters. Pernambuco cotton is a substitute for that of Louisiana in the European market, while that from Fernando da Naronha and Rio Grande do Norte is not inferior to the best sea island of Georgia.

Tobacco grows naturally, and promises well. That of Bahia and other provinces, when well prepared, can compete with Havannah.

Vast plains, and even the sides of hills, favour throughout the empire the culture of rice, which sometimes grows a yard in height, and yields better crops than on the fertile lands of India. Maranhão rice rivals that of Carolina, and on the marshes and banks of the rivers of Matto Grosso, on those of the Rio San Francisco, and others, it grows and yields excellent crops without labour.

Magnificent results are obtained from maize, which is largely cultivated in the southern provinces.

The vine is also a new branch of agriculture, which is rapidly progressing, under encouraging conditions, in the provinces of St. Paulo, Parana, and at Nova Friburgo, in the province of Rio de Janeiro.

Manioc, from the roots of which is made farina, is used as food in all the provinces. Tapioca is also cultivated with good results.

The India-rubber (*Siphonia elastica*) an indigenous tree, which yields the valuable gum now used for so many and various purposes, contributes large sums to the revenues of the provinces of Para and the Amazonas, and is now cultivated to a considerable extent. It is probable that the province of Rio Grande do Norte, which will shortly be opened up by railway, will contribute largely to the export of this valuable article of commerce.

Of all the branches of industry, the most profitable, as well as the most important, is the breeding of horned cattle, principally in the southern provinces, and in San Paulo, Bahia (chiefly in the interior), Ceara, and Rio Grande do Norte. In these provinces cattle breeding is left entirely to nature; the breeder does nothing but receive the profits, the whole labour consisting in collecting the cattle now and then in places for the purpose, called

"rodeios," in order to mark the calves. For this work half-bred Indians are employed at about £1 per month.

In order that some idea may be gained of the vast extent of territory which the empire contains for the *increase* of this industry, it is sufficient to state "that the prairie of Araxá, or the central tableau (as the French express it), where rise the chief tributaries of the Amazon to the north, and Parana to the south, measures 1,939 kilometres from east to west, and 968 from north to south, covering an area of 1,874,048 square kilometres."

Sheep-breeding is of less importance, though increasing.

Iron, from its abundance and good quality, is by itself one of the most important elements of the wealth of the empire. In general, the deposits may be easily and economically worked, being in great part placed in the vicinity of extensive forests, which after being cut down re-appear in from six to ten years, thus producing quantities of fuel near abundant streams, which constitute immense power for working machinery. In the province of Minas Geraes immense quantities of this metal exist, the quantity on the Espinaço range being almost incalculable. A large portion of this mountain is composed of oligistic, magnetic, and micaceous iron. The oligistic undergoes decomposition on the surface, owing to the action of the atmosphere, and forms layers of limonite, which overspread vast sandy expanses.

An enlightened Government has seen the necessity of opening up the resources of this vast empire by railways, and the Government have been authorised by the Legislature to grant, during thirty years, a guarantee of 7 per cent., or to warrant provincial guarantees on the capital employed in the different railroads, which by their plans and statistics show a probability of a net annual revenue of four per cent. ; the capital to be guaranteed is limited to £10,000,000.

Government have already availed themselves largely of this authorisation, having giving the guarantee of 7 per cent., or warranted the provincial guarantees on the sum of nearly £9,000,000. Hitherto some difficulty has been experienced in raising the necessary capital for the construction of these railways upon this security, probably on account of the depression in trade which has overspread the universe during the last three years. But it is hoped, that when the political atmosphere in the East has been cleared, and confidence has been restored, the value of a Brazilian guarantee will be properly understood, and, no doubt, the progress of these important undertakings will be unimpeded. Besides, it is understood that the Government have agreed to some modification in the original form of guarantee, which is more in favour of intending shareholders than heretofore.

Already a great many railways, in all parts of the empire, have been constructed, and most of them give highly satisfactory results. The San Paulo, worked by an English company, is a fair example, returning in some years 9 per cent., part of which, however, is shared with he Government under the conditions of the concession.

The provinces, in addition to those railways warranted by the general Government, encourage the development of their internal resources, and have resolved to guarantee interest in a similar manner upon lines which will clearly be advantageous to the province, and in this way the prosperous province of San Paulo has been enabled to construct railways all ovea its area. The province of Rio de Janeiro, *the richest of the empire*, has also opened up in the same way many prosperous districts, but much yet remains to be done. This province, one portion of which is separated from the city of Rio de Janeiro by the intervening bay, has several large trunk lines already constructed, and terminating on the opposite shore at the city of Nictheroy.

Here, unfortunately, a break takes place in the journey, and the shipment of all the merchandise becomes necessary. This is both costly, cumbersome, and slow, and has been the means hitherto of rendering these provincial railways unremunerative, and, as a consequence, has prevented and retarded the construction of branch lines or feeders.

No doubt the guarantee of this particular province of Rio de Janeiro is as good, if not better and safer, than that of the Imperial Government, as this rich province is only responsible for its own actions, while the general Government has become "bail" for every quarter of the empire. But as no Government could be expected to keep putting its hand into the treasury to make up deficits for an unlimited number of speculations, the progress of these branch lines or feeders has been temporarily interrupted, awaiting the invention of some means of tunnelling under the bay, which would give uninterrupted communication, not only with those trunk lines already constructed, but with numerous extensions of them into the adjoining provinces. If this could only be accomplished—and all sorts of contrivances have been proposed, and some tried, but without success—the great treasures of the rich sugar and coffee districts of Rio de Janeiro, Espirito Santo, and Minas Geraes, would be placed in direct railway communication, uninterruptedly, with the markets of the capital of the empire. On an average ten thousand persons per diem cross the bay already by ferry; what would the result be if a railway existed? and, if added to this, the great traffic anticipated from the railways I have mentioned were secured to a tunnel railway, a most profitable enterprise must be the result. This, then, was my great idea, to develop which I had arrived in London.*

* For a valuable and statistical description of Brazil I may refer the reader to the work upon that empire by Mr. William Scully (editor *Anglo-Brazilian Times*). Trübner and Co., Paternoster Row.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Consultation—Theory and anticipations—Proposal for bridging the bay—A railway round the harbour entertained—A specially constructed steamboat—Kindness of the telegraph authorities—An old and cherished friend—His peculiarities—Mrs. and Miss — —A human barometer—The effects—A hospitable and kind-hearted man—Sympathy with the oppressed races—Arrangements—A visit to relations—My mother—My cousins—The County of Wicklow—First impressions of the beautiful Glendalough—The Vale of Avoca—Picnics—"Oh, no! it was something more exquisite still."

MY first object on reaching London was to consult somebody experienced in engineering and business matters, as to the best mode of procedure. No doubt, the suggestion I was about to broach was a bold one, but then I argued, if it is practicable, which I believe it is, it cannot fail to be highly remunerative, provided the required outlay is not exorbitant. And surely in a matter of such seemingly vital importance to the welfare of the principal province in that empire, support will be forthcoming from the Brazilian Government, if solicited.

At first I contented myself with consulting one or two engineering friends as to the practicability of the undertaking, and the probable cost of the works; and in so far satisfied myself that there was nothing to prevent the realisation of my project, always provided it should be found, upon investigation, that my theory with respect to the granite foundations of the bed of the bay were correct, for I need hardly point out that it was my object to

connect the opposite shores of the Bay of Rio by a subaqueous tunnel under the harbour, And first, having ascertained that the huge mountains of solid stone which enclose the bay are composed of dark porphyritic granites, with rose-feldspar crystals, of which some of the islands in the bay are composed, and other granites, grey and rose colour, blotted with micaceous nodules, no doubt existed in my mind that the entire surface of the bottom of the Bay of Rio de Janeiro must be of granite formation —a material, the well-known impermeability of which has been established. What could be more reasonable under these circumstances than my proposition of boring, by the aid of powerful machinery, a tunnel for railway purposes?

Proposals have been submitted for bridging the distance, about one and three quarter miles, but seeing that the shores to be connected stand not far from the entrance to the harbour, this would interfere with the shipping, a contingency by all means to be avoided. Besides which, such an undertaking would be tremendously expensive, even if practicable, and at best a shaky, straggling concern. Another proposition was for a railway round the harbour, the circumference of which, as I have previously stated, is one hundred and forty-eight kilometres. This plan would be as wise as that of a traveller leaving Liverpool for Paris to get to London. But although such a proposition was very unlikely to meet with success or even approval, it was actually temporarily entertained, so important was a connection of some sort deemed to be. Finally, a specially constructed steamboat, with a necessarily very small draught of water, was fixed upon; this steamer was to convey a train bodily from one side of the harbour to the other, but after repeated failures, the vessel only remained a failure and a dead loss on the hands of the proprietors. These were the examples I had before me, and the conditions I have stated were the only preliminary

details I possessed; and I now sought the assistance of some capitalist to enable me to push forward my investigations, and seek a concession from the Imperial Government of Brazil. The expenses attendant upon the latter were not likely to be very great, but with respect to investigations, plans, &c., considerable outlay would probably be entailed, and it was with a view to this emergency that I desired to be associated with another party.

I called upon the representatives of the Telegraph Company, but did not for the present deem it advisable to explain my future movements. Nothing could have been kinder than my reception, and before leaving I was handed a cheque for a quarter's salary, in consideration of my past services; this was both flattering and encouraging.

For many years I had cherished amongst old friends, whom I always visited when in London, a very worldly-wise, busy little gentleman, whose extraordinary knowledge of railways and bridges, law, politics, governments, stocks and shares, mankind and womankind, and in fact of everything relating to the wonderful machinery which moves this busy world of ours, of which London is as it were the axis, had always been a surprise and a puzzle to me; and to this friend I now applied, in the hope that his quick perception, clear-headed judgment, and business knowledge, would guide and assist me in bringing forward my soul-absorbing project.

My friend was reputed to be a wealthy and prosperous man; I had known him for many years, during which fortune seemed indeed to have smiled upon him. He had been a beau at Brighton, when I carreered across the Downs with the hounds, but he was not, as I then anticipated, destined long to be allowed the freedom of single blessedness, and he now occupied one of the best houses in the West End, where he and Mrs.——, a lady possessing rare charms, and of very prepossessing appearance, and a

beautiful and accomplished daughter, resided for a portion of each year.

Mr.—— principally occupied himself watching the upward or downward movements of the more important stocks and shares of the day; he was himself a large holder of some of the best securities, and as he was by nature almost as sensitive as the stock market, the human barometer of his own person was more or less affected by these changes. When the tendency of his own particular fancy stock was "upwards," he invariably returned to his West End retreat viâ Covent Garden, where he would invest in the newest and most luscious of seasonable or tropical fruits, wherewith to gladden the hearts of the juvenile ——s, to whom he was much attached. But when the tendency of the market was "downwards," poor Mr.—— would be very despondent, would leave the city, choosing a tortuous and circuitous route through the poorest and most dismal of streets, where the squalor and misery on every side would but be in keeping with his own frame of mind; no fruit market or lollypop shop would be visited on these occasions, and the poor little ——s, who had waited in vain for papa, would be obliged to go to bed without their sweetmeats.

Mr.—— was both hospitable and kind hearted. If any doubt existed as to his nationality, it was soon removed by a short conversation, for all his sympathies were with the oppressed Celt, whose miserable condition and hard lot he was ready to lay at the gates of Westminster; his heart was in Ireland, but his comfortable residence in London. Several years of his life had been passed in India, "amongst the people of an oppressed race," as he called them, and they also had his sympathy, but their climate had not dealt fairly with him, and he constantly complained of feeling unwell, and would attribute his indisposition to the effects of the high temperature of Hindostan; but a little consolation from his friends, and an

assurance that his looks at all events did not betray ill-health, soon had the effect of restoring convalescence, and he would wend his way to the city as eagerly and as happily as ever.

He listened with evident interest to the description I gave him of my proposal for connecting the great railway systems of the province of Rio de Janeiro with the capital of the empire, and at once volunteered to assist me, both with his experience and means, and it was decided that I should at once return to Rio de Janeiro for the purpose of securing the necessary privileges from the Government of Brazil. My friend, however, who was a very cautious and shrewd man, was not disposed to risk very much for the present, until it should be made clear that the Government were disposed to grant the privilege about to be demanded, which being secured, would warrant further outlay; in which he would be happy to assist me, upon certain terms and conditions, which would be hereafter arranged between us, drawn up by a lawyer, and duly executed; all of which I agreed to, and it was arranged that I should as soon as convenient make a start. Before doing so, however, I wished to visit my mother and sister, who were staying at Bath, and also my relations in Ireland. My poor mother's health had not been good for some time past, and she was always warmly interested in my welfare, and I was glad of an opportunity, before again leaving England, of explaining my movements to her.

My cousins in Ireland were also anxious to hear all about my proposed undertaking, and over these visits I spent a fortnight. It was the spring of the year, and everything at Monaline looked fresh and green. Few counties possess more natural attractions and beautiful scenery than the county of Wicklow; bounded on one side by the Dublin and Wicklow Mountains, and on the other by the sea — scenery immortalised by Moore. I

shall never forget my first impressions of the beautiful "Glendalough," or the "Vale of Avoca"—

> "That vale in whose bosom the bright waters meet."

Nor will the memory of pleasant picnics at the "Devil's Glen," or "Lough Dan," ever fade from my mind.

> "Yet it was not that nature had shed o'er the scene
> Her purest of crystals and brightest of green;
> 'Twas not her soft magic of streamlet or hill.
> Oh, no! it was something more exquisite still.
>
> "'Twas that friends, the beloved of my bosom, were near,
> Who made every dear scene of enchantment more dear,
> And I felt the best charms of nature improved,
> When I saw them reflected from looks that I loved."

CHAPTER XLVII.

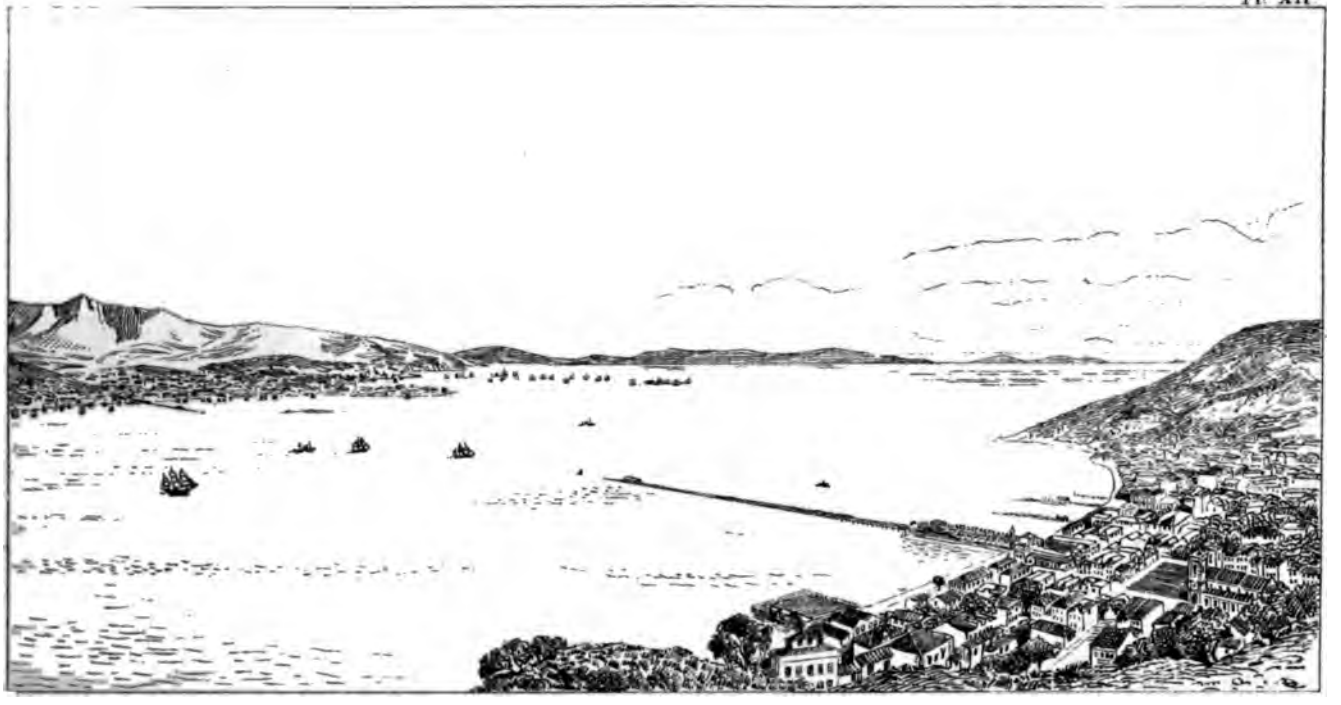
The beautiful Bay of Rio de Janeiro again—My faithful friend L.—The Café Americana—An influential "deputado"—The petition—My friend L. attacked by yellow fever—Difficulties—The Minister of Agriculture's question—The Government decree—My poor mother's death—The services of an eminent engineer secured—A new system of subaqueous tunnelling—Mr. B.'s report—The effect—A concession is granted—The real difficulties commence—Statistics—The Tower Subway—Startling engineering feats—Once more bound for Brazil—Mr. F.—Yellow fever—The object of my visit postponed—The mountains of Tijuca—The irresistible charms of the fair equestrians—A visit to Nova Friburgo—The Baron de Nova Friburgo—The Nova Friburgo and Cantagallo Railway—The journey—The hotel at Nova Friburgo—The country round Nova Friburgo—The "Cascata do Penel"—A three hours' ride through the mountains—Friends—L., McN., and T.—The murmur of the waters—The growth of tropical vegetation—The necessity of a guide—An illustration—The consequences of sleeping upon a billiard-table—My reception by the Baron—Sad death of a friend from yellow fever—Translation of a letter received from the Baron.

THE beautiful Bay of Rio de Janeiro once more stood prominently before me, nor did it ever look more charming and attractive than now, as we passed the majestic "Sugar Loaf," and drew up in front of the fort of "Villegainon," awaiting a visit from the health officer.

I was met on board the steamer by my faithful friend L——, whom I had previously informed by letter of my advent; and when that afternoon I made my appearance in the Rua D'Auvidor and the "Café Americana," that "Elysium of sherry cobblers, cocktails, and cooling 'caju,'"* it was much to the surprise of old acquaintances.

My plans of procedure had been carefully prepared, and

* A beverage brewed from a wholesome Brazilian fruit.



the following day I called, with my friend L——, upon an influential "Deputado," to whom I had a letter of introduction, and who finally undertook to make an application on my behalf to the Imperial Government. "The great difficulty," he explained, "will be to convince the Minister of Agriculture of the feasibility and practicability of the enterprise, but I promise you to do my best."

In order the more conveniently to place before his Excellency the Minister of Agriculture, the details of my proposal, I embodied them in the form of a petition, the exact interpretation of which was at the same time personally explained to the minister by my friend the Deputado. Some weeks would necessarily elapse before any definite decision would be arrived at, for, as a rule, nothing is done in a hurry in tropical climates. Meanwhile I had nothing to do, and under these circumstances I once more visited my friend P—— at his fazenda at Taquara, where, however, I only remained a few days. On my return to Rio I found that my friend L—— had been attacked by the dreaded yellow fever. He had just reached his rooms at Nictheroy, where he lived (on the opposite side of the bay from the city of Rio), and now for several days I never left him. Being a slightly formed man the fever was more quickly got over; but during the remainder of my stay on this occasion he was weakly and unfit for much physical exertion. No reply had yet been received by me from the Government, but already difficulties began to show themselves, and I was sent for by the Minister of Agriculture to remove them. When I reached the "Agricultura," which building overlooks the bay, the minister, who was awaiting my arrival, took me to the window, and after surveying the scene, asked me if I really felt sure of being able to carry out such a gigantic undertaking, and several other questions, my replies to

which appeared to remove his doubts, and before I left his presence I had been promised a favourable reply.

The following week a *Government decree* was promulgated, authorising the necessary investigations, and calling for certain *data* and statistics, which would demonstrate the practicability and probable value and results of the realisation of the enterprise. In the event of these investigations and details being satisfactory the Government undertook to grant a *concession* to protect the undertaking.

This was all I expected from the Government for the present, and now, for the first time, it became known publicly what my object in visiting Rio had been. But I had much before me yet, and without loss of time I again set out for London, where I was able to present a favourable report to my partner in this matter, and to produce the *decree* I had obtained.*

So far nothing could have been more satisfactory, both to myself and my patron; and it now became necessary to interest and secure the services of an eminent engineer to proceed to Rio. With this object I obtained an introduction to Mr. P. W. B——, F.R.S., with whom arrangements were entered into, and his son, Mr. P. W. B——, C.E., subsequently proceeded to Brazil, taking instructions from his father. On arrival in Rio de Janeiro Mr. B——'s practical knowledge and experience in engineering led him to the belief that a new system of subaqueous tunnelling, which had long since been matured by his father and himself, might with manifest advantage be employed in Rio harbour; and his investigations afterwards confirmed him in this view, and led him to propose, in lieu of a cutting through the underlying strata of the bay, an *iron tunnel laid upon the bottom.*

This tunnel, which was planned to start in deep water

* I regret to say I was, shortly after my arrival home, destined to say farewell for ever to my poor mother, who died after a lingering illness.

from the termination of long piers or viaducts on either side, was to be of tubular form, constructed of wrought-iron plates half-inch thick, strongly riveted together, and thickly lined inside with brickwork set in cement, having a sufficient space for the passage of the trains; the traction to be by wire rope, worked from stationary engines on either shore.

These tubes were to be constructed on shore, hermetically sealed, launched, and floated to position, where they would be lowered by specially adapted appliances, and joined together, without the aid of divers, by means of a patented process.

Mr. B—— subsequently reported to the Government the result of his investigations, embracing these recommendations, reminding the authorities at the same time in his report that, "It will be seen by the section also, that the Bay of Rio at the points chosen is peculiarly suitable for such an undertaking, on account of its gradual incline from shore to shore, uninterrupted as it is by a single projection or sudden fall.

"As regards the probable traffic, the statistics obtained show that the movement across the bay, under the present slow, unsafe, and cumbrous means of transit by ferry boats, produces an annual revenue of £60,000 from passengers alone, and to this must be added the large goods traffic shown below.

"Little doubt, however, can exist that, under the vastly improved system proposed, the population and commerce of Nictheroy will become very rapidly developed."

The effect of this report was *that a concession* was granted to me for fifty years, for the construction of a submarine tunnel for railway purposes across the bay.

But now the real difficulties in the progress of my scheme had to be met—the finding of the necessary capital for its realisation. The cost would be nearly three-

quarters of a million sterling, and this was a larg
more especially for a foreign as well as untried under
The statistics, which would bear any amount of in
tion, according to calculations based upon *data* supp
Mr. B——, showed a profit, after deducting work
penses, of nearly 20 per cent. But, unfortunately
fallen upon bad times; trade and speculation w
standstill, and capitalists were afraid to venture,
a wealthy firm of contractors undertook to carry
open for traffic the whole construction, pledg
capital and reputation of their firm upon the
issue. But, of course, the capital for construction
forthcoming. True, that was not my only diffi
even the very possibility of such a structure was
although the same engineer who had recomm
system had only a few years before startled L
driving an iron subway under the Thames
greatest possible ease; and this was merely a st
nor is the greatest perfection so improbable as th
itself was fifty years ago. To add further still
culty, war had been declared by Russia again
the money market was completely paralys
was advised that without a guarantee of intere
Brazilian Government it would be impossible
necessary capital. Accordingly once more I
Brazil, this time accompanied by Mr. F——,
representing the contractors. But on our arr
de Janeiro yellow fever was raging in an epidem
such an extent that nothing could induce Mr.
leave the mountains of Tijuca, nor would he
remain longer in the country than until the retur
steamer we had arrived by, a period of three
Under these circumstances I was obliged to po
application for an interest guarantee until t
session of the Brazilian Parliament.

The greater part of my three weeks' stay was spent amongst the beautiful mountain scenery of Tijuca, where we passed our time enjoying the charming views which can be obtained from the peak of the Tijuca Mountain, the Lion's Head, the Chinese, and the Reis View. Nothing can excel the splendour of the landscape, as it is seen from any of these looks-out. The "Peak" is nearly 3,000 feet above the bay, every inlet and island of which can be seen distinctly.

Mr. King, the proprietor of the hotel, better known as "White's," than whom no one can be more courteous and attentive to his guests, always provides capital horses or mules for these mountain expeditions. Often picnics are improvised by the residents at the hotel, when pleasant riding parties issue up the mountain slopes, to some "happy" spot shaded by the cooling influences of the bamboo, whither the good things have proceeded; and on these occasions, I have been informed, many a British heart of oak has been subdued amidst the softening influences of this beautiful mountain scenery, by the irresistible charms of the fair equestrians.

Before returning to London—for I determined not to remain, on account of the fever, but to come out again in a few months, when Parliament met—I wished to visit the Baron de Nova Friburgo, the richest fazendaero in the country, and the owner of the Great Trunk line of railway on the other side of the bay. I was anxious to invite his opinion on my plans. Accordingly, accompanied by one or two friends, we took the train to Nova Friburgo, the residence of the Baron. Nova Friburgo, a Swiss colony, is situated in the Friburgo Mountains, about 3,500 feet above, and eighty miles from Rio de Janeiro. The fever had been committing very serious ravages for some days previously, and numbers of people were leaving the city for the pure air of the mountain districts. The journey up the mountain sides was novel and interesting in the

extreme. The ascent is worked on the Fell system, a third rail being employed. I shall not attempt to describe the peculiarities of this system, further than to say that it is on this third or middle rail that the working and safety of the train depend. Two little wheels at right angles to the rail, governed by a break, grasp with regulated force the central rail, as the little Fairlie engine winds its way gradually and tediously round and round the mountain, until the summit is gained, and the rich table lands of Friburgo, stretching to Cantagallo and Santa Magdalena are reached. The gradient is in places very steep indeed, and so slow is the pace, that at these places a passenger may leave the train and walk behind for a short time: but he must watch his opportunity of getting in again at an instant, as the gradient lessens and the engine again takes a "spurt." The valley beneath, as the little train glides along the very edge of the precipice, requires a good head to gaze upon, so great is the abyss below, and few ladies have the temerity to look from the window until what would appear the danger is passed. Probably some of my readers may have travelled by the Mont Cenis Railway, which is worked on a similar principle.

On reaching the hotel at Nova Friburgo, we found it—the only good hotel—kept by a German, so full that we were finally obliged to put up with beds, made up, upon the billiard-tables, the play upon which was suspended in our favour for a few days, the landlord declaring he had no time to attend to billiards in the crowded state of the hotel. Nothing could have been better than the shake-down thus prepared by the landlord, the billiard-room being the largest and most airy in the house. The room contained two billiard-tables and one bed, and the usual paraphernalia of washstands, looking-glasses, &c., were added.

The country around Nova Friburgo was very charming,

abounding in places of interest, and before paying my visit to the Baron, the temptation to visit the "Cascata do Penel," a magnificent waterfall three hours' ride through the mountains, was more than my friends, L——, McN——, and T——, and myself could resist. And never do I remember during all my rambling amongst the mountains of Brazil a more beautiful or interesting ride, terminating at the "cascata," the murmur of whose waters as they came tumbling down from the heights above reached our ears half an hour before the glen stood before us. It had been necessary to bring a guide with us, as the growth of the tropical mountain vegetation is so rapid that in a few days the path-ways are obliterated, and the guide was obliged to go ahead, clearing with his long sheath knife sufficient space for the passage of ourselves and mules. To describe the ever-varying vegetation we passed through would occupy too much space. The large tropical house at Kew Gardens, if it were carpeted with the densest overgrowth of hundreds of varieties of ferns and locypodiums, the trees covered with parasites, orchids of the choicest and most brilliant hues, and the whole thickly intertwined with creepers and arborescent shrubs, and forming an almost impenetrable forest, alive with screaming parrots, chattering monkeys, and gaudy-plumaged birds, would illustrate this eight miles ride over the mountain and through the valleys of Friburgo better than any attempt I might make. My friend L——, poet and feuilletonist, promised to bestow a portion of his descriptive powers upon it, but whether this simple ride to the "Cascata do Penel," unsurpassed in my humble opinion for its freshness and beauty, failed to arouse his poetic fancy or direct his graphic pen, I know not; probably the hard surface of the billiard-table interfered with digestion, and disturbed the natural flow of thought and idea, and the world has been made to suffer in consequence.

I was most kindly received by the Baron, who evinced the warmest interest in my enterprise, and promised me every assistance in his power—a promise the value of which it would be difficult to overestimate.

On our return to Rio, we were grieved to hear of the death, from yellow fever, after a few hours' illness, of a young fellow who was to have made one of our party, but who was at the last moment detained on business. I mention this incident as an illustration of the uncertainty of life during a yellow fever epidemic. We had been absent but four days, during which time our friend was carried away; had he not been detained, it is probable he would have been now living.

Previous to my departure for England, a few days later, I received the following letter from the Baron de Nova Friburgo, which will explain better and more independently than anything I might write the value attached to my proposed Tubular Railway:—

"NOVA FRIBURGO,
"*April* 19, 1876.

"SIR,—In a letter dated the 16th inst. you did me the favour of enumerating the advantages which ought to accrue from the realisation of the enterprise so ably projected by you, 'The Rio de Janeiro and Nictheroy Tunnel Railway,' and amongst all the most important, perhaps, are those which relate to the railways which start from the capital of the province of Rio de Janeiro, since, as you affirm, the trains in a journey of eight minutes can traverse the distance which separates the city of Nictheroy from the capital of the Empire.

"I have no hesitation in believing in the beneficial results which the provincial railways must derive from the construction of a tunnel that will unite the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Nictheroy; nay more, I believe that novel method of communication once established, so as to secure

a comfortable, safe, and reasonable passage, the enterprise in question would be forced by their interests to adopt it for the conveyance (without the drawbacks and cost of loading and re-loading) of the articles of exportation destined for the capital, bringing thence the merchantable articles which constitute the return (importation) traffic.

"Nor am I at variance with the expectations you entertain as to the prosperous development of the City of Nictheroy, which being thereby converted into a suburb of the capital by means of the tunnel, will thus be able to obtain even the drinking water it so urgently requires immediately the proposed enterprise becomes a reality, and is maintained under the conditions above referred to. If this idea be carried out, I am of opinion that the enterprise may consider its future guaranteed, and that all the estimates arrived at will become facts which time will evolve.*

"You invited my opinion as to the 'Rio de Janeiro Nictheroy Tunnel Railway.' You now have it. Without claiming to be an authority, in giving it my sole object is to reciprocate the kind courtesy with which you have condescended to treat me.

"Under the conviction that any attempt which, like this, proposes to facilitate the entry into the Rio de Janeiro market of all our agricultural products is the most consonant with the most vital interests of this province, I will conclude this letter, assuring you of the ardent wishes I entertain for the complete and auspicious realisation of your 'grandiose' undertaking.†

"I am, Sir, with the greatest consideration,

"&c., &c., &c.,

(Signed) "BARON DE NOVA FRIBURGO.

"To H. LINDSAY BUCKNALL, Esq."

* It was intended to run pipes through the tunnel connected with the water system of Rio de Janeiro.

† Translated from the Portuguese.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Additional statistics—Mr. F.—Peculiarities of the harbour of Rio—Mr. John Taylor—Pernambuco—The drive to Caixinga—Christmas Day—A hospitable countryman—The plum-pudding—A tropical *v.* northern Christmas dinner—Seasonable fruits—Absent friends—My old friend McM. again—Jimmy Watt—Leaving Caixinga—Catamaräos—My sixth visit to Rio—Tijuca "Vendas"—The sick merchant is ordered change of air—Marvellous recovery of the sick man under the circumstances—The place to spend a pleasant day—Plants—Orchids and ferns—What to select and how to pack them—Petropolis—Advice to visitors—Fever and ague.

MY late visit to Brazil had not been altogether fruitless, as, in addition to collecting a great many additional statistics of probable traffic, I had been promised the assistance of many influential Brazilian gentlemen in support of my scheme, besides getting some modifications allowed in the terms of the concession which would facilitate the completion of the necessary plans ordered by the Brazilian Government.

Mr. F——, although he had been too much alarmed at the extent of the yellow fever epidemic to venture beyond the precincts of Tijuca, had at least been enabled to gather some useful information with respect to the cost of labour and material; and to ascertain at the same time that the conditions of the bay offered all the facilities for successfully carrying out the works which had been described. The rise of tide is ordinarily no more than eighteen inches; the current one mile per hour; and for

nine months in the year the water in the harbour is as calm as a mill-pond. When, in the course of a few months, the time arrived for once more journeying to Brazil, I was enabled to take all plans required for the approval of Government previous to the commencement of the works. And on this occasion I was accompanied by Mr. John Taylor, an engineer of great ability, who, unlike his predecessor, had no dread of the climate.

Mr. Taylor, who had never ventured upon so long a voyage before, was very pleased with the splendid accommodation on board the good steamer *Tagus*, of the Royal Mail Company, in which we made the voyage. Pernambuco, the first Brazilian port of call, was reached on Christmas day (1876), a very different Christmas from anything he had been accustomed to in the North of England, from whence he originated. At that time of year, in Brazil, the sun is south of the Equator, and the heat as a rule is intense—and on this occasion it had lost none of its midsummer characteristic; and as the steamer would remain in harbour until the next day, a number of us formed a shore-going party, taking with us a "plum-pudding" made on board by order of the captain, and a sprig of mistletoe, being determined to keep up the good old English custom.

The drive to Caixinga, some six or seven miles from the city of Pernambuco, where we intended passing the night, is very interesting and striking to the visitor. The pretty quintas and chalets, so characteristic of the scenery —Italian, Spanish, and Moorish architecture, coloured blue, white, or chocolate, nestling as they usually do amongst orange, plantain, or palm-trees, flowering creepers and pretty flower gardens—usually command the admiration of the traveller and impress him favourably with the country.

We were a large party, and one likely to gladden the

heart of a rural hotel-keeper on an ordinary occasion; but this being a "feast day" *par excellence*, the hotel was already crowded with holiday seekers anxious to escape from the city for a day, and the poor proprietor looked bewildered. At first he declared he could not accommodate us; but eventually he succeeded in making room for all in some way, by giving up his own room to the ladies, for we were not altogether a bachelor's party.

Having been appointed guide, manager, and paymaster of the party, I was about to see after our Christmas dinner and give orders for the cooking of the "pudding," when I was interrupted by the hospitable voice of a countryman to whom I had been introduced on a previous visit to P'buco, who declared that I must dine with him and a large party of his own. Of course I was obliged to decline his invitation, saying I could not desert my own party. "How many of you are there?" now inquired my friend C——. "Ten," I replied. "Never mind, they must all join. We will have one long table in the 'patio,' under the trees." He would have no excuse. Insisting upon my introducing him to all the party, he invited each of them specially to be his guest. Later on a deputation waited upon C—— requesting his acceptance of the plum-pudding, and nothing now remained but to get up an appetite for all the good things; and in order to insure this desirable object, excursions were made into the surrounding country, the company breaking up, according to fellowships and inclination.

What a contrast this tropical Christmas dinner would have presented to that of our northern relatives at home! There would have been seen the well-fed Christmas beef, stuffed turkey, and blazing fire—while here at Caixinga, our cloth was spread under the orange-trees in the open air, where we vainly endeavoured to keep ourselves cool by sipping iced champagne. Nothing could have exceeded

the hospitality of our host, nor would our turkey have contrasted poorly with the best in Leadenhall, while the keenest disciple of Epicurus could not have pictured anything more cooling, enticing, and delicious than the splendid array of *abacaxi* (the celebrated pine-apple of Pernambuco—probably the most delicate flavoured of its species), custard apples, bananas, cambucas, fresh oranges, bacuri, alligator-pears, pomegranates, water melons, mangoes, guavas, and other jellies and sweetmeats. But amidst all these delicacies we did not forget to toast our generous host from the Emerald Isle, and to thank him for his sumptuous entertainment; nor did we neglect our "absent friends;" and no doubt, as we did so, there was more than one heart which, like my own, wandered for a moment many a mile from Pernambuco.

Amongst the company at dinner I was glad to meet my friend McM——, who had accompanied me to Santa Cruz, and who was then residing in Pernambuco; and also "Jimmy Watt," whom I have mentioned in a previous chapter as the great horseman and successful jockey of the River Plate. He had left that part of South America, and had accompanied us from England on his way with some engineers, to survey and make constructive plans for a railway in Rio Grande do Norte, for which, on behalf of the concessionnaires, I acted as agent in London, and for the construction of which I had successfully negociated. Poor Watt had worked hard in the Argentine Republic, but of late years had been unfortunate, and had now accompanied this party of engineers to Rio Grande do Norte, commencing, as it were, life all over again. He was, however, determined to get on; and possessing, as he did, considerable quickness and talent, he acquitted himself so well that in the last letter I received from him—while writing these concluding pages—I was happy to hear he had got a good appoint-

ment, as engineer, under the Brazilian Government—although he had never studied engineering previous to his Rio Grande do Norte experiences. So much for pluck and determination!

Early the following morning we took leave of Caixinga and our hospitable entertainer, and once more sought the good ship *Tagus*. The sea was very rough as we rounded the point of the treacherous reef which shelters the inner harbour of Pernambuco from the open roadstead, but thanks to the experienced helmsman of our stout "whale boat," we were enabled to reach the steamer with dry jackets.

As I have mentioned before, the roadsteads of Pernambuco are nearly always visited by a long rolling heavy swell, which makes it difficult either to embark or disembark. The fishermen on this coast use the catamarão, a peculiar structure in which they sail long distances from shore—made of several trees lashed together—which are always submerged, and consequently run as it were through these rolling seas. A small stand is raised above this submerged deck, upon which the occupants will exist for two or three nights. The appearance of these catamarãns is very peculiar, nothing being visible except the sails and this little raised platform.

I always look upon the voyage to Rio as almost completed after leaving Pernambuco, although the journey occupies five more days, and includes a short stay at Bahia. But, somehow, as so many passengers land at the former port, and one begins to get ready for the Custom-house, the time appears to vanish quickly.

Mr. Taylor's admiration of the Bay of Rio almost equalled my own. We were no laggards on that morning, as, for the *sixth time* for me, we quietly approached our moorings, and I was enabled to point out the position of the proposed tunnel to the representative of the contractors.

Although the city of Rio was almost entirely free from yellow fever, I deemed it advisable at once to take up our residence at Tijuca. No doubt there is no suburb of Rio so healthy, cool, and pleasant to live in as Tijuca, situated as it is at an elevation of nearly two thousand feet above the city, a height to which the germ of yellow fever never penetrates.

There are several other tolerably good hotels, more conveniently situated with regard to access of the town, but they all savour somewhat of the "vendé," which is never far off. These vendas, or stores, are a kind of general provision shop, where "carne seca," or dried salt jerked beef, "touchino," or Brazilian bacon, sugar, fruit, groceries, cockroaches, black-beetles, and myriads of ants, and drinkables, are all mixed up together. These places, principally kept by Portuguese, are, as a rule, never cleaned out, and consequently the smell created by them, in the heat of the day, is sickening and overpowering, and so numerous are these establishments, that the whole city is perfumed by them; the wonder is the proprietors are not stifled. But I do not think the olfactory nerves of foreigners, as a rule, are easily offended, and no doubt *dirt* has more sympathizers in Brazil than elsewhere, and it seems to agree with them too, if a story I have heard related is true. A certain wealthy resident merchant of Rio, who had been very ill for a long time, was ordered by his medical adviser change of air to Petropolis, a healthy city situated amongst the Estrella Mountains. But the effect of the change, usually so beneficial, had in his own case, a contrary effect, and nothing the Petropolis doctor could do seemed to benefit him. At length, in despair, the original Rio doctor, who had in the first instance recommended the change, was sent for. He immediately on arrival—it was the doctor's first visit to the mountain city—declared the air "too thin" for the

patient, and ordering the windows at once to be closed, he proceeded to compound a prescription for "thickening the atmosphere," and bringing it to the usual consistency of the air inhaled by the sick man in his Rio residence. The mixture, which consisted of equal quantities of "carne seca," "black beans," fat Brazilian bacon, veno de pasto, cockroaches, and the usual "seccos e malhados" of a venda, was then brought into the sick-chamber. The effect was marvellous, and instantaneous; the dying man at once gave evident signs of recovery, and in a few moments sat up in bed, gladly sniffing and inhaling the "thickened atmosphere," and in a few days, the mixture being carefully allowed to ferment in the room, his convalescence was complete.

Our first business was to present our plans to the Government, and then await their decision. During this interval we made sundry "borings" in the bay, for the purpose of testing the nature and consistency of the bottom, and the opportunity was taken advantage of by my companion for visiting the beautiful suburbs of the city, so justly celebrated for picturesque scenery, beautiful quintas, chalets, and gardens.

I do not know a pleasanter place to spend an idle day, than Tijuca, for any one who takes an interest in botany, or delights in fern or orchid hunting. Hundreds of varieties of the former and dozens of the latter may be found at any season amongst the hills, the character changing according to elevation; the ascent to the Peak of Tijuca and the Chinese View road being especially worthy of a visit. Both these classes of plants are easily carried to Europe. Of course there are a great many orchids not worth carrying. I have, therefore, for the guidance of those of my friends and readers who take an interest in these beautiful plants, endeavoured to name the best of those, which are either indigenous to, or

obtainable at Rio de Janeiro.* Orchids should be packed in boxes *dry*, with one-eighth of an inch layer of shavings between each layer of plants, packed closely, that is, as many plants as convenient to be put in each box. Care must be taken in transit not to place them too close to the engine rooms; further than this they need no attention.

The matter of ferns is more difficult to deal with. They rejoice in so many synonyms that naming varieties would only mystify. It is sufficient for fern raising, to collect the "spore fronds," or seed leaves, which can be easily carried; each frond should be placed under separate cover. If, however, it is desired to collect the roots, they can be easily carried by planting them closely together in wooden boxes, with about three inches of soil. They may be planted any length of time previous to the voyage, but before going on board they should be cut down closely, and the box filled loosely with dried bamboo or other leaves, protected by battens of wood. Care should be taken that they are kept in the air, not turned upside down, *and free from salt water*. They must be moistened every fourth day with fresh, not condensed water, but without removing the covering or leaves.

Petropolis, that mountain city which I have said was too salubrious for the sick man of Rio, is well worthy of a

* Oncidium intermedia.
„ labrata, Liopoldi.
„ Sarcodes.
„ crispum.
„ Marshalli.
„ phymatochilum.
„ varicosum.
„ Rogersii.
Sophronitis, any varieties.
Stanhopeas, showy but not valuable.
Zycopetalmus, showy but not valuable.
Miltonias, all the varieties.
Scelia purpurata.
„ cinnabarina.
„ crispa (Cattleya).
„ elegans.
„ perruisa.
„ pumila (Pinelli).
„ Schilleriana.
Cattleya, Acklandiæ.
„ amethystina.
„ amethystiglossa.
„ bulbosa (Walkeriana).
„ guttata.

visit, and indeed for those who have nothing to detain them in the city, I would strongly recommend them to make Petropolis their head-quarters. The scenery is exquisite, and the roads all about are perfection. There the emperor has his summer palace, and all the foreign ambassadors most do congregate, and yellow fever is unknown. It is within easy access, by a combination of steamer, train, and diligence from the metropolis.

My advice to all visitors to Brazil or other tropical climates is, keep as much as possible to the mountains or elevated plains; never be tempted to remain, if it can be avoided, even for one night, in low marshy grounds, where intermittent fever and ague always lurk. If you are obliged to do so, and the house be more than one-storied, occupy the top rooms; otherwise, do not allow your doors or windows to be open after sundown, and, above all, do not venture out in the night air. An individual, whether in this country or abroad, should consider well before placing himself within the influence of a malarious atmosphere. No worldly advantage can be set off against the miserable condition of a man subject to periodic ague. *I disregarded these precautions myself, and have had reason to repent it ever since.*

CONCLUSION.

The ministerial decree—Negociations pending—Great undertakings—Anticipated pleasures—A sequel—To my fair readers—"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick"—"No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets."

BEFORE leaving Brazil I had the satisfaction of seeing in the *Official Gazette* a decree approving the plans for the construction of the Rio de Janeiro and Nictheroy Tubular Railway, but for reasons which I cannot here explain, I had not solicited an interest guarantee upon the estimated capital, as I now found it advisable to extend the area of my scheme, so as to include the purchase and prolongations of other existing railways on the Nictheroy side, whose trains would pass over the lines of the Tubular Railway, and with regard to which, as negociations are at present in progress, it would be impolitic to enter into details.

When commencing this autobiography, I fully expected before its conclusion to have been able to announce the happiest and most successful results. But great undertakings are not realised or carried through with electrical speed, nor is the narrow path which leads to fortune always strewn with roses. Great success has already been achieved, and believe me, if I am obliged to defer the crowning announcements, it is not without its disappointments for me, and others whom I need not name. At present there are no visible signs of an ebbing tide in the affairs alluded

to by Shakespeare, in the motto I have chosen, and if I am permitted to realise my fondest hopes and achieve success, it will give me great pleasure and satisfaction once more to visit Monaline upon the kind invitation of its mistress, to whom I have inscribed these pages, and there, amongst scenes of endearment and kind friends, to take up the thread of my narrative, and complete a story, with whatever additions I may deem interesting, as a sequel to "A Search for Fortune."

Some of my fair readers will doubtless be disappointed at no mention being made of the approaching union of two congenial spirits, but, as I have before hinted, that must for the present remain untold.

Others again will argue that as "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," these several postponements can only tend to loosen the bonds of love and friendship which have so long existed between us; to the latter I can only reply in the immortal words of the most sentimental of national bards—

> "No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
> But as truly loves on to the close;
> As the sunflower turns on her god when he sets
> The same look which she turned when he rose."
>
> *Moore.*

THE END.

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